Negotiating Ethnicity in China

Citizenship as a response to the state

Chih-yu Shih

Routledge Studies on China in Transition

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Negotiating Ethnicity in China

"Professor Shih cites unprecedentedly rich material from a wide variety of Chinese minorities to show that people construct their ethnicities more variously than any of the usual theories would predict. The book remakes political anthropology as a kind of plate tectonics involving more collisions, subductions, withdrawals, and contingencies than most accounts of ethnicity admit. Shih shows that such a view is needed to describe the nation that has become most populous."

Lynn White, Princeton University

"In this new work on ethnicity and identity, Chih-yu Shih, one of the most original and productive scholars writing about China, analyzes a variety of minority-group perspectives in their 'China moments' of dealing with the state – providing new insights into what it means to be Chinese today."

Peter Van Ness, Contemporary China Centre, Australian National University

This challenging study brings together anthropology and political science to examine how ethnic minorities are constructed by the state, and how they respond to such constructions.

The author argues that the various citizenship projects of the Chinese government cannot determine how local people respond and develop. Each chapter describes how a particular group of people in a particular locality has responded to government initiatives, and finds the various reactions to be full of creativity, potential resistance, and unintended subversion of "China as a state identity."

Shih contends that China means something to ethnic minorities only at the moments when local people are dealing with the government or the Party. Arguing that the Chinese identity of local ethnic people is not important after the state decides that they are loyal citizens and leaves them to live their own lives, he finds that ethnic identities supposedly incompatible with citizenship projects sometimes remain influential in these non-state spheres.

Disclosing endless mini-negotiations between those acting in the name of the Chinese state and those carrying the images of ethnic minority, this book provides an image of the framing of ethnicity by modern state-building processes. It will be of vital interest to scholars of political science, anthropology, and sociology, and will be essential reading to those engaged in studying Chinese society.

Chih-yu Shih, National Chair Professor of 2001–2004 at National Taiwan University, teaches Chinese politics, cultural studies, and political psychology. He received his MPP from Harvard University and Ph.D. from the University of Denver. In addition to thirty-three Chinese books, his English publications include *Collective Democracy, State and Society in China's Political Economy, Symbolic War, China's Just World*, and *The Spirit of Chinese Foreign Policy*. His ethnicity is Chinese Miao.

This one

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Negotiating Ethnicity in China

Citizenship as a response to the state

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Preface

The research for this book and its publication would have been impossible without the assistance of many of my teachers, colleagues, friends, students, and even the unintentional assistance of government authorities, and to all of them I express my thanks.

I have found neither the research nor my situation as a researcher easy. My professional identity as a political scientist causes two problems. The political problem is that local Chinese authorities are very sensitive to the presence of a Western-trained, Taiwanese, political scholar in ethnic areas – four ingredients that do not usually go together in Chinese scholarship. The academic problem is that my writings, aimed at the opening of possibilities, are unable to fulfill the usual requirements, accepted in both political science and anthropology, of searching for fixed behavior patterns.

For me as a political scientist, there were practical difficulties. On my first field trip to Western Hunan, I had to wait for one and a half days in a local hotel, for county authorities at first decided I could not enter the mountains. Similarly, in Yunnan's Menghai County, Sichuan's Mao County, and Hunan's Chengbu County, the local hosts told me that I was to visit sites not normally open to the outside world, which includes Taiwan. On some of my trips, local authorities wanted me to spend my time purely as a tourist. On another trip to Sichuang's Meigu County, I was warned not to reveal that I came from Taiwan. Warnings were often friendly, given so that I would not shock my interviewees into complete silence. During my friend Song Yongyi's six-month detention in the second half of 1999 and early 2000 for co-chairing a Cultural Revolution project with me, I was in China twice. Each time I anticipated some type of contact by security people, but nothing happened, except that I was hospitalized in a remote mountain area for a day with a mysterious bout of diarrhea.

In Taiwan, before my research intention was clear to its reviewers, the National Science Council supported all my field trips in 1995 and 1996. After that, the council decided that interviewing, which I used in all field research, was not an appropriate research method for political scientists. Moreover, the council considered that my previous writings in English were of no academic value. The council demanded that, for the purpose of funding, I conduct a large-scale social survey in specifically selected minority villages. Apparently political reality would

not allow this. But in my opinion, the survey method, which is said to represent the true opinion of the group under study, would merely reproduce the official ethnic categorization, which I had intended to open.

On the other hand, I am not eligible for funding in the profession of anthropology. In none of my trips did I stay long at any one particular site, as is required for orthodox anthropological observations. In Taiwan, anthropologists are not interested in political analysis in general or the state's ethnic policy in particular. Nor do I belong to any anthropological professional association.

However, I was lucky enough to be able to fund my trips after 1997 in various other ways. My former teacher Hu Fu kindly recruited me in 1995 to help his foundation setting up scholarship in China. I was able to fit in a number of side trips for personal research purposes. Professor Hu supported me throughout. His Eastasia Democratization Workshop also helped me on one occasion. Under the leadership of Professor Yang Kaihuang, the Mainland China Studies Association in Taipei provided crucial connections for a number of trips. The Chiang Ching Kuo Foundation sponsored one trip, the Himalayas Foundation another. The National Science Council was still an important source in general, supporting a trip I made in 1998.

Numerous Chinese scholars and local authorities were involved in all my trips. Local cadres from the Taiwan Office were always helpful in coordinating things for me. I was much better off than an international scholar in this regard. Director Shi Yongshu of Yongshuen County, Hunan, must be acknowledged here for his extreme warmth in all my five trips to his domain. Academics such as Lin Chaomin and Li Donghong at Yunnan University, Yi Xiaoming at Jishou Ethnic University, Lou Chengwu at Northeastern University, Du Gan at Sichuang Social Science Academy, Wu Yuzong at Southwestern Ethnic College, Yang Shubiao at Zhejiang University, Bai Yihua and Tang Jinsu of the Ministry of Civil Affairs, among others, took time to help me. In Taiwan, Professor Ginger Hwang of the National Sun Yatsen University as well as Shan Chaochi of the National Chiang Kaishek University used their personal connections to arrange trips for me. Both Ginger and Kaihuang accompanied me in some of these trips.

As the National Science Council gradually cut down its support, I was once stuck with no money to attend an international conference to present preliminary findings. Elizabeth Perry brought me to Harvard, and Brian Bridges and David Goodman each arranged for me to attend a Hong Kong meeting. At Stephen Levine's insistence, the organizer of an international conference on ethnicity in Taipei included me among the speakers. Mustapha Pasha arranged a theme panel for me at the International Studies Association's annual meeting in Chicago. Overseas Chinese scholars, including Song Yongyi, Zhou Yuan, Wang Youqing, and Dali Yang, together sponsored my attendance at the Chicago meeting. This last incident shattered the popular myth of rich Taiwanese supporting needy Chinese. Chinese scholars are beginning to help Taiwanese do research.

A final word on what has brought me to ethnic studies. I am an ethnic Miao, but I have never felt this relevant to my research agenda. I used to study Chinese

political culture in foreign policy, political economy, and legal reform, as well as village democracy. After I returned to Taiwan in 1990, I was stunned by how local authorities, as well as intellectuals, had distorted the portrayal of China as a whole.

Later on, I began to appreciate that misunderstanding reflects a pyschotherapeutic need in postcolonial Taiwan. In my country, political leaders carrying a Japanese colonial legacy used to despise anything Chinese. They became Chinese at the end of the colonial occupation. Being Chinese, they were unfortunately inferior by the ruling Kuomintang's anticolonial standards. After coming to power, they have struggled to cleanse their Chinese identity in order to rebuild their self-respect. I did not know how to cope with the atmosphere of self-hatred in society thus aroused. Nor did I convey my observation well to my colleagues overseas. Consciously, I wanted new languages.

Exposure to cultural studies in the early 1990s, especially feminist and postcolonial thinking, enabled me to find a language suitable for people torn among multiple identities. David Blaney and Lily L. H. Ling stand by me through the Internet when I debate with colleagues in Taiwan. It is at this point that I go into the deep Chinese mountains for insight. I also began seriously to reflect on the meaning of myself, as an ethnic Miao, teaching Chinese politics in Taiwan. As I learn how to empathize with and read (or imagine) subjectivity into the people I study, I must also believe that someone else can do the same thing to me. This means that even if one day I have to succumb to the prevailing political mood in Taiwan by cleansing myself of my Chinese elements, my current research keeps alive for me the hope that someone else can still read Chineseness back into me.

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1 Introduction

Inside "China moments": ethnicity as legality and policy

Becoming China

Today, it is not difficult for elementary-school children to point out on a world map where China is. Except for an extremely small number of experts, however, few can describe the nature of China's various territorial disputes. Perhaps only those living in Taiwan, where the government continues to include Mongolia as part of China on maps, are aware that "China" is not a simple geographical entity. Leaders of pre-sovereign China had never needed clear borders. Giving it such borders now will only deny the moral superiority they feel, which crosses human-made boundaries of all kinds. Nor had the Chinese been known for drawing lines to indicate ethnic distinction. In fact, many groups of people who were originally not considered Chinese became Chinese simply by acquainting themselves with the Chinese Confucian and Daoist way of life while either conquerors of the Chinese Empire, which felt itself to be ruler of "all under heaven," or victims of celestial conquest. At best, China has been a country of changing ethnic composition. Yet even this conceptualization may not be accurate.

China, which used to mean "the beautiful flower in the center" (signified by the notion of the "central plain" – China's highest moral symbol) has been a sovereign state since 1911. The flower could move, and so could the "central plain" where each successive court located its capital. Perhaps the only factor of pre-sovereign China consistent with its twentieth-century counterpart is that it had a symbol, which took the form of the Emperor or the Son of Heaven. However, no single imperial family could reign forever. The number of people subscribing to the celestial order determines the physical border of "China as a symbol of all under heaven." China was thus a concept defined by people instead of by territory. Yet the definition of the term "Chinese people" was even more obscure than the definition of "China." A quick look at the number of different ethnic groups from remote areas who at some time conquered the central plain reveals the complex synthesis that is the Chinese people. The offspring of those who, for various reasons, decided to move away from the central plain may continue to call themselves Chinese at the beginning of the twenty-first century. On the other hand, others may never have realized that their ancestors were once "under-heaven" Chinese.

Interestingly, when US president Bill Clinton and Chinese president Jiang Zemin met in 1998 in the People's Republic of China (PRC), there did not seem to be any question about where China is or who the Chinese are. When Clinton pressed hard on behalf of the Chinese in terms of their human rights and Jiang claimed that the Chinese had their own human rights philosophy, their mutual understanding on an unproblematic China or Chinese people was striking, though unnoticed by most in the audience. Neither leader wondered if their disagreement on human rights arose from different views of what constitutes an essential China and/or an essential America. In retrospect, it was precisely this kind of interaction, though under a different setting, that had given birth to the concept of "sovereign China" in the first place. Most scholars would probably trace the origins of the "misconception of China" back to the Opium War.

History books on the modern Chinese typically start with the topic of the Opium War. The celestial Qing court under the sinicized Man imperial family suffered greatly before realizing that the lack of a clear boundary to "under heaven" no longer suggested universal benevolence but, rather, vulnerable indefensibility. Closing it up seemed to be a desirable option. The court's inability to defend the territory, however, led it to appreciate the newly introduced notion of sovereignty. The court officials, as well as the revolutionaries who overthrew them later, understood the importance of protecting and strengthening Chinese sovereignty as a critical element to reviving "China." In other words, "sovereign China" was China's response to Western imperialism. Interestingly, people inside sovereign China today are so preoccupied with the shame brought about by imperialist intrusion that they do not recall that neither pre-sovereign China nor the Chinese people had any sovereign borders, or for that matter nationalist pride. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP), on the first page of its own history, presumes the authenticity of China and the Chinese people throughout China's history:

> Modern China began in the mid-19th century, suffering foreign capitalist imperialism and domestic feudalism and sunk in the abyss of bitter predicament and extreme shame. *The sovereignty of the country was deprived.* . . . The Chinese people entered the 20th century with the national shame of the rape of Beijing by the Allied Forces. At that time, what lay ahead of the Chinese people seemed to be a prospect of miserable darkness at the brink of destruction.[1] [my emphasis]

To reinvent China as a nation with sovereign borders has required intense and continuous effort. Two general goals emphasized by political leaders of the early People's Republic were to unify the country and to strengthen it.[2] Both these goals presupposed that China was already a defined territory. However, the goal of unification implied the existence of "splitters" who served as both the target of and the force pushing for nationalism, and the goal of strengthening implied weakness and the need for state-building. The obsession with eliminating these splitters as well as ameliorating so-called weaknesses guaranteed that China as a sovereign entity was beyond questioning. Unification and modernization

have become intrinsic elements in all discourse on China since the beginning of the Chinese sovereign state. It was the general belief among political leaders that the calls for modernization and unification reinforced each other. Therefore, following this line of reasoning, they felt that it was weakness that bred the splitting forces, and that the splitting forces obstructed modernization.

Nationalism and its secular goal of unification have faced two fundamental threats. One was disintegrating power, whose consequences were the Civil War in 1949 and the splitting of China into the Communists' People's Republic and the Nationalists' Republic of China, located in Taiwan. Whether China will reunify in the future has been a question constantly raised by both sides. The other threat was from peripheral habitats where ethnic communities were yet to share the state citizenship of China. China was split into two, divided by the Taiwan Straits. Both sides have continued similar missions, and each has maintained its own sphere of influence. Their common goals are to modernize the state and to mobilize citizens' loyalty (away from family, religion, and tradition and toward a distant, abstract state). The Communists perceived alienation among previously Nationalist-ruled areas and peripheral ethnic communities, and the Nationalists struggled to win support from the Taiwanese, who had previously been colonized by the Japanese, and to maintain a nominal connection with Tibet and Mongolia on the Chinese mainland. The People's Republic devised all kinds of mass campaigns to reach its ends, including agricultural collectivization, the Great Leap Forward, the Cultural Revolution, the Four Modernizations, and Reform and Openness to the Outside World. The cycle coincided with the rise and fall of the Cold War, which featured politics of suppression that subjugated ethnic politics until the early 1980s. At the same time, Taiwan witnessed a period of turmoil and state-building, such as Terminating Insurrection, through the Chinese Cultural Renaissance, and The Ten Great Constructions, then into the current Democratic Reformation. Ethnic identity politics did not revive in Taiwan until the late 1980s.

Ethnic politics is essential in defining the meaning of China. It pertains simultaneously to unification and modernization. Ethnicity indicates where the potential splitters may exist that threaten national unification, as well as the backward forces that hamper state-building.[3] Both denying the relevance of ethnicity and promoting it are at best different strategies pursued by the Chinese leadership in the process of state-building. In addition, a change in ethnic politics would immediately involve the unification issue. This is especially true where unification is still seen as a worthy cause. The dominant discourse on the surface is nonetheless about creating modernity – but a modernity whose meaning is still in question, having lingered since the late Qing Dynasty. The debate between the liberals and the New Left continues today: Is the call to modernize China a call to individualism or to collectivism? What role do the masses (peasants, workers, and soldiers) have in bringing modernity to China? Was the pre-reform history of the PRC simply feudalism, or was it a different kind of modernity?[4]

In the debate on the nature and the path of Chinese modernity, there is no reference to the likelihood of achieving the various ethnic notions of modernity. This hiatus parallels the consensus that the pre-1949 history of China was feudal,

backward, and unworthy of mention. China will be hindered in the process of becoming China for as long as modernity and unification remain dreams unfulfilled in ethnic areas.

Becoming minorities

The study of ethnic consciousness is a study of the relationship between China's small numbers of ethnic minority people and the vast majority of Han Chinese. More precisely, it is a study of ethnic relationships within the same sovereign territory. Ethnic minorities are no longer minorities existing outside national sovereignty. "Minority" is a notion meaningful only in comparison with a majority and is therefore premised on a fixed territorial confinement.[5]

In China, it is said that there is a Han majority and fifty-five minorities. Together they form the Chinese nation (*zhonghua minzu*). The Chinese nation implicitly carries the notion of Chinese territorial sovereignty. Loyalty to the Chinese sovereign state and membership of the Chinese nation are two sides of the same coin. Strong Chinese consciousness protects ethnic consciousness from confrontation with Han consciousness, whereas low Chinese consciousness creates a defensive attitude on the part of the minorities toward the Han. Therefore a study of ethnic consciousness in China is a study of the Chinese consciousness of the ethnic minorities in China, and this is, in essence, what this book is about.

The Han majority doubtless identifies easily with the Chinese nation. It is common sense that the overseas Han people treat themselves, and are treated by the Chinese, as Chinese, while this cannot be said of the ethnic minorities. How an ethnic individual perceives himself/herself if living outside China is a useful clue to the relationship between that particular minority and the Han. A plausible hypothesis is that the more an ethnic minority identifies itself with the Chinese nation, the less it needs to distinguish the Han from itself. From another perspective, the Chinese consciousness of a minority is stronger if its members feel less need to make a distinction between themselves and the Han.

Paradoxically, China, in becoming a modernized and unified nation, has also become locked within territorial borders. As a result, the "Chineseness" of the Chinese people no longer depends on how loyal they are to the emperor and assimilate the Confucian values of harmony and selflessness. The notion of "Chineseness" has relinquished its fluidity and spontaneity. This development has serious consequences. For example, the relationship between the Han, who have mixed with many non-Han people during the course of history, and non-Han people emerged as an issue once China became a sovereign state. Since the opposition to imperialism gave rise to sovereign China, patriotism became an inherent element of "Chineseness." Therefore, nobody inside sovereign China retains the freedom to choose their nationality. The Han, leaders of the new country, would inevitably feel threatened should the non-Han fail to give their loyalty to the government. It is this concern that has given rise to the notion of minority groups in China.

The sovereignty discourse did not allow the Han and the non-Han to be governed by spontaneous exchanges, as in pre-sovereign China. Once China was enclosed within sovereign borders, the Confucian values that once guided emperorship could not survive the call for patriotism. Since then, the non-Han people became officially both Chinese and members of minorities. Hence it is easy to see that any foreign attempts to speak on behalf of these minorities will be regarded as intrusive by all the peoples of sovereign China. This is ironic: what imperialism was supposed to have destroyed was the Son of Heaven's emphasis on people's hearts and his inattention to physical borders and territory. Protecting this celestial empire now led to its destruction. In short, while the Western concept of sovereignty replaced Confucianism in defining the China discourse, anti-imperialism remained the predominant signifier of sovereignty.

The fact that national leaders need to denounce pre-sovereign spontaneity in order to assert the new form of sovereignty-based unity leads to alienation from what China always meant to their self-identity as selfless rulers. This self-alienation created enormous pressure on the Chinese government to prove that it is always benevolent toward minorities and that minorities are unambiguously and voluntarily Chinese people. In order for the Han government to show benevolence, the minority category was given legal status. There is another important, though latent, function of the existence of minorities. As potential targets of imperialist subversive activities, minorities "reproduce" – as postcolonial writers put it – China and Chinese people as enclosed in constructed sovereign borders. Since minorities are by definition members of the Chinese nation, the differentiation of Han and non-Han brought about by sovereign identity exposes an underlying fear that the Chinese people may not be united in opposing imperialism. The definition of Chinese under a sovereign China thus acquires an oppressive character contrary to the more flexible version of the "under-heaven" Chinese identity.

The Chinese discourse began its transition from the most beautiful flower in the center. Through a shifting central plain and an under-heaven symbol of harmony, it finally merged with the anti-imperialist sovereign state (see Table 1.1). The China discourse underwent an evolution very different from that of the history of sovereignty elsewhere in the world. Retracing the path leading to the rise of sovereign China would be useful to the analysis of international (i.e. inter-sovereign) affairs because it discloses various deep dispositions often inexpressible in the sovereignty discourse. We might ask, for instance, why the leaders of sovereign China appear defensive, irrational, or even occasionally psychotic in the eyes of Westerners. It is thus useful to look at practices of

Table 1.1 China discourses

	China	*Chinese people*
Celestial order	Shifting central plain	"All under heaven" vis-à-vis non-Han
Sovereign order	Territorial borders	Han and minorities

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Chinese sovereignty in peripheral areas in order to appreciate what the leaders of sovereign China experienced. These practices also reveal how they struggled to win recognition, as well as the anxiety inherent in their leadership.

Resistance to Western intrusion forced China to adopt the concept of sovereignty into its present-day structure. In order to facilitate the resistance, China constructed new boundaries that define and distinguish ethnic minorities. Needless to say, the new constructions have led to resistance of different kinds, not to the Western intrusion into sovereign China but to the Han intrusion into minority regions. Ironically, resistance to Han intrusion sometimes relies on Western support. This complex web of resistance may have given certain false impressions to mainstream political science in the West, which either mistakenly foresees an end of history along a so-called liberalization model,[6] or a doomed conflict of the bright versus the dark,[7] or the emergence of a global civil stratum.[8] It is here that the focus of this book engages with mainstream Western scholarship. Is assimilation (the integration of all non-Han people into the Han mainstream) a process of becoming China and therefore anti-Western or is it a process of becoming Western – or, as some recent studies suggest, is it neither of these?

Although the literature offers no definite answers to these questions, recent publications cast doubt on the utility of assimilation policy. For example, Schein demonstrates that sometimes assimilation is no more than a kind of internal Orientalism (the tendency in Western literature to conceptually lock the mysterious alien civilizations into a geographical Orient in order to feel secure),[9] making the ethnic community an exotic target possessed by the developmentalist discourse. Gladney argues that the target group of assimilation policy, when adapting, can affect the meaning of Chineseness dialectically and even creatively develop its own identity.[10] Harrell *et al.*'s and Postiglione's case studies show that assimilation is not always effective.[11] There is another view, represented by Mackerras, that the 1980s political trend toward giving identity to the minorities is incompatible with the goal of integration anticipated by the assimilation policy,[12] although the same author expresses awe at the forces of modernization, which he thought definitely favor the trend toward integration.[13] In any case, the relationship between integration and giving autonomy to ethnic areas is dubious at best.[14] Many agree that ethnic communities cannot escape the forces of assimilation, yet there is no guarantee of the direction they will take as assimilation trends proceed. Opening a dominant discourse and giving a voice to the local motivates a number of critical writers. For example, both Wu and Bulag praise localized hybridity (i.e. the state of those who have been under the influence of more than two civilizations).[15] Litzinger reports on localized "moral geographies."[16] And many others have detected, in their case studies, indications that local subjectivity[17] or even sheer coincidence[18] have created new forms of hybrid identity.

Most of these studies focus on single cases where some local creativity is shown in responding to the state's assimilation policies. Concurring on the general line of suspicion toward both the goal and the effectiveness of assimilation, this book tries to further the argument by bringing in as many cases as possible in

one volume to show that adapting to assimilation policy, or to "civilizing" projects (designed to raise "backward" people to a "higher" way of life, and usually implying modernization), takes various forms depending on the locality of the minority in question. In other words, this book highlights not only the resultant hybridity of a particular case, but also various hybridities juxtaposed in a number of cases. Like other studies, this book challenges the ways in which a particular ethnic group is defined and how its image is constructed. By presenting multiple case studies in this book, I try to broaden the perspective and to challenge how China itself is defined. Like other scholars of Chinese minorities who intend to open ethnic politics to discussion by local people, it is my intention in this book to make Chinese state-building and nationalism accessible to local people, especially to those considered as having lost ethnicity in accordance with Chinese national politics. Since the goal is to deconstruct China, we cannot avoid talking about politics. This book differs from its predecessors by its coverage of politics and by devoting much of its discussion to democratization, village democracy, citizenship, and so on.

China as "moments"

China is no longer China if those who see it interpret it in different ways, such as by their social positions deriving from locality, ethnicity, and possession or lack of Party membership. China becomes meaningful to people as a nation-state insofar as it defines behavior, because referring to China either constrains behavior or motivates it. For example, in answering the call of Chinese nationalism, people give China an unproblematic existence. This cannot be true at all times, since one cannot keep China in mind twenty-four hours a day. In this sense, China is more a temporal or historical concept than a territorial or geographical one. If no one referred to China for a long enough period, "China" would be meaningless. Since 1911, more and more of those who act in the name of China have understood China as a sovereign state. Although the concept of a sovereign state alludes to territory, China has to be defined repeatedly on temporal dimensions, at least often enough so that people will not forget. So a seemingly territorial concept depends on practices over time to continue being meaningful. But this leads to the opening up of a common definition of China that can be shared by all those inside (or outside) China.

"China" and "patriotism" form a typical collocation in government rhetoric, and Beijing has been able to consolidate its power as leaders negotiate among themselves what to say about China in justifying their policy decisions. As a result, Chinese citizens have become passive in their reception of the meaning of "China." This is what Duara calls the remaking of "the people" by containing their feudal past.[19] The sheer vastness of territorial China and the enormous variety in the cultural background of cadres and local residents together cause the broadcasting of the meaning of China to encounter endless mini-negotiations at various levels. The result is that one person's understanding of, or mental construct of, China will be different from that of another. Political realists deny

the relevance of these differences, since they do not help in accounting for the distribution of political resources. However, if one is interested in what people do outside the conceptual realm of China, this preference will lead one to read people's lives in dramatically different ways. The conclusion might be that the notion of China appears embarrassingly irrelevant on many occasions.

This is why I contend that China is no more than "moments" for people who are busy with their own lives: China means something to ethnic minorities only at the moments when local people are dealing with the government or the Party. Yet these people have to satisfy the demand the state makes on them to reproduce the notion of China as the benefactor of those who act in its name. For example, when instructed to do so, they might help the Department of United Front to mobilize ethnic peasants and thereby indirectly consolidate the notion of China as unquestionable. I call such instances of the temporary existence of political China in these people's lives "China moments." It is only through such moments that theorists are able to proclaim any grand theory that applies to "China." This is because the discursive power of the Chinese government would not protect theorists from seeing what people do outside these moments. This is implicitly the epistemological reason why China experts must treat official discourses seriously – following this argument is what makes China experts meaningful experts. This is even truer for those who are critical of China for its political abuses of human rights or for its threatening military gestures. Imagine what would happen to liberal states if such an "evil" China ceased to exist. They would lose a target for their contempt. It would be the end of history, the end of the nation-state, and the end of liberal critics of China.

Moving beyond the tendency to "essentialize" China – that is, to assign it an "essence" – this book will bring into sharper focus a portion of the ongoing, seemingly endless small negotiations that deny any fixed meaning for China. It will look for signs of "creative survival" and what Jing calls "explosive energies" that exist only "inside of time."[20] Areas in which China as an identity is being disputed and reproduced include gender, class, locality, religion, and education. Ideology, occupation, personality, family structure, and Party membership further complicate the notion of China. In this book, I focus on the factor of ethnicity.

Instead of treating ethnicity as another essential category, I look for responses issued by members of ethnic groups on the subject of Chinese states' citizenship projects. This book adopts the perspective of "minorities looking out" rather than "the world looking in." The rationale is to provide a voice for the subaltern of postcolonial discourse, previously thought submissive. The voice is not necessarily clear or even consistent. Therefore the book does not intend to resolve the contradictions or incompatibilities embedded in the interface of the state system and local circumstances. Instead, it records them and shows ethnicity to be situational, fluid, and hybrid. From the state's point of view, the integrity of China depends on the assimilation of ethnic people into mainstream Han culture. Despite the fact that this book does not portray "China" as a fake, my treatment of ethnicity and ethnic citizenship does inevitably deconstruct "China" by taking us behind the official rhetoric of the Chinese state.

Treating "China" as a series of "moments" in the view of the minority peoples shows that the struggle between the Chinese state and its people is a temporal matter. Yet there is no denying that the case studies in the following chapters are also about people's struggle to control their own space. This struggle is the main focus of other studies that seek to deconstruct China.[21] However, space is not the best metaphor: different localities can meet and share a temporal moment, but such temporal moments give rise to the misperception that one common space emerges before separating and moving on to completely different temporal moments. Each individual must take his or her own path in coping with the state, or with sovereign China – each individual psyche exists in temporal processes that cannot totally overlap anyone else's. In addition, there is always the problem of how to draw the borders of a particular communal space. If we see China as moments, by contrast, the distance between personal localities can be measured only tentatively by how close one is to a state-assigned role at a particular moment. It is not measured by the degree of assimilation in general.[22] Anagnost calls this the "politics of presence."[23] From this perspective, China can come and go. If we treat our subject matter as negotiation over space, we lose the fluidity in a metaphor of temporal path that holds together but does not freeze seemingly contradictory role-playings or self-images.

Moment 1: reaching ethnic minorities

Contacts between the state and minority ethnic people are necessary to allow ethnic people to become citizens of the state. The contacts can be real and direct, or they can be indirect, existing only in discourse. The state reaches out to ethnic people in four ways. First, it recruits ethnic cadres to serve in the central government. They serve as role models for those in the hometown, who will believe that their ethnic membership will not hinder their political participation. Protective policy that guarantees both privileges and honored government positions for people from minority ethnic groups shows that membership of such a group can be a plus. Those who serve the state at the local level also serve as role models. All these ethnic state employees are on the state payroll and execute state policy. By accepting jobs offered by the state, they in turn tacitly accept the legitimacy of the state establishment.

To recruit ethnic cadres, the state sponsors ethnic education from primary school up to college level. Ethnic delegates are essential components in people's congresses and political consultation conferences, and administrations at various levels deliberately recruit and promote ethnic officials. These, however, do not necessarily serve their own people. Indeed, local ethnic cadres play double roles. On the one hand, they convey to the government how expedient policy should become once it reaches an ethnic area; on the other, they explain and enforce government policy. These double roles sometimes make such a role difficult to play. Both successful cadre education and the stake that cadres have in the state establishment create a boundary between cadres and their own people. Whether or not the recruiting of more ethnic cadres contributes to the "civilizing" or assimilation of ethnic areas cannot be judged in any general way.

The second mechanism by which the state reaches out to ethnic people is through the drawing of autonomous administrative districts. The law stipulates that heads of autonomous governments and their branches must be from the ethnic minority concerned, though their associates can be Han cadres. Autonomous districts enjoy legislative power over autonomous affairs. Examples of relatively large districts include the Mongols in Inner Mongolia, the Uygurs in Xinjiang, the Tibetans in Xizang (Tibet), the Zhuangs in Guangxi, and the Muslims in Ningxia. Autonomy is the opposite of self-determination. According to official theory, only oppressed nations have the right to self-determination. Since capitalist classes no longer hold power in socialist society, there is no longer an oppressing nation. Accordingly, only subversive elements would advocate self-determination instead of autonomy.[24] The notion of autonomy does, however, imply the struggle against imperialist subversion from outside China, as well as against Han chauvinism. The establishment of autonomous districts enhances ethnic consciousness to a certain degree, which is conducive to the execution of government policy. The state takes advantage of the culture and language of ethnic districts, thereby reaching further into the ethnic community.

The third tool used by the state to reach out to ethnic people is the media. "Civilizing" projects work most effectively in the media because the programs broadcast are products of a monopoly. Han lifestyles seen on the screen, sometimes unreal even to most Han, become the model for ethnic people. Hence what ethnic minorities are assimilated to is, to some extent, an artificial construct. In addition, the image of patriotism is forever present. The limitation is that programs using (Modern Standard) Chinese are not accessible to many ethnic people. In recent years, more ethnic programs have begun to show up on television, but these programs are aimed at promoting Han people's appreciation of ethnic culture rather than presenting such culture as of intrinsic value. Ironically, however, such promotion has enhanced the sense of dignity among many ethnic people and they become the most committed watchers of these programs. Whether programs should be aimed at an ethnic audience or the majority Han audience is a constant puzzle to the Chinese state authorities. Since the late 1970s, the importance of bilingual education has received growing attention. It not only helps children to adapt to school education but also contributes to the fight against illiteracy. Newspapers and policies printed in ethnic languages have a broader readership in the ethnic areas concerned. State-sponsored ethnic-language papers are the state's most modern tool for extending its reach.

The final mechanism is through social policies, especially those that focus on population and economics. The state reaches out to ethnic people in granting privileges such as allowing them a higher birth quota, sponsoring ethnic schools, and giving exemptions to investment restriction or tax schedules. A side effect is that many Han with one parent belonging to an ethnic minority request to return to that parent's ethnic status so as to enjoy these privileges. Equally relevant is that more intermarriage has taken place since the early 1980s. On the economic side, enterprises are encouraged to explore business opportunities or exploit natural resources such as forests, mines, and water in autonomous

mountain regions. In Tibet, for example, in a reversal of previous policy, the government has started to encourage individual Han enterprises to enter Tibet in hopes that this will enhance and enliven the market sensitivity of Tibetans. Related policies include making better-off Han areas accountable for the welfare of ethnic areas. Beijing for Inner Mongolia, Hebei for Guizhou, Jiangsu for Xinjiang and Guangxi, Shangdong for Qinghai, Tianjin for Gansu, Shanghai for Yunnan and Ningxia, and the whole nation for Xizang are all examples of such an arrangement.[25]

Moment 2: mobilizing ethnic minorities

In addition to reaching out to ethnic people, the state also strives to mobilize them to participate in political and economic affairs. The purpose of mobilization is to enlighten ethnic people about becoming state citizens and to transfer their object of loyalty from traditional kinship networks to the abstract state. There are four types of mobilization. The first is revolutionary mobilization, which began before the establishment of the People's Republic. Some famous revolutionaries were from minority populations, such as Xiang Jingyu of the Tujia and Deng Enming of the Shui. These individuals were participants at either the first Party Congress in 1910 or the second one in 1922.

Revolutionary mobilization is based on the premise either of imperialist invasion or of exploitation by landlords. Although the general appeal of such mobilization does not focus on ethnicity, it nonetheless carries important messages concerning one's revolutionary responsibility. Japanese imperialism or landlords are convenient and common targets among different ethnic people. Ethnicity becomes further irrelevant as revolutionary targets include members of ethnic minorities, an irrelevance crucial to the realization of universal citizenship. Likewise, the Cultural Revolution was supposedly effective in distracting ethnic consciousness. During the Cultural Revolution, however, ethnic languages still became direct targets in some areas, which created alienation among the ethnic peoples affected.

The second mobilization channel is through "thought education" – education in socialism and patriotism, which includes education for citizenship, or civic education. An example of this is the attempt to construct a socialist nation at an abstract level that includes all the ethnic nations in territorial China. In this regard, the government enlisted Joseph Stalin's notion of a socialist nation that contains all the proletarian ethnic people. The formation of the socialist nation is a result of the changing relationships of production after the socialist revolution. The whole purpose of constructing such a socialist nation is to eliminate the last remnants of capitalist nationalism.[26] Accordingly, inter-ethnic relationships are the same as relationships within the working class.[27] Thought education in a socialist nation cannot deny that in reality the lack of equality evident in China today remains a serious problem. The acknowledgment that backward ethnic groups exist is actually the basis for privileged policy. In this regard, all ethnic groups should accept the developmentalist perspective, which focuses

on the differences among ethnic groups in terms of their economic level and distinguishes today's ethnic issues from those that existed before the proletarian classes came to power.[28]

This developmentalism brings us to the third mobilization channel, economics. The purpose of economic mobilization is to allow individual ethnic people to act competitively in the market, and to contribute to the welfare of their families by enhancing their productive and profiting capabilities. There are two views. One argues that developmentalism leads to a competitive relationship between Han and minority populations. The other is that the result can be cooperative for all the parties involved. In reality, fights for land, water, timber, mountains, and tourist sites are quite common between different ethnic communities. This is especially true between Muslims, Man, and Han in Ningxia, Hebei, Liaoning, and Jilin.[29] Furthermore, physical confrontations occur regularly between inland ethnic workers migrating to coastal cities for seasonal jobs with locals, and Han immigrants from other inland areas. Moreover, developmentalist policy enforced in ethnic areas may overlook the indigenous attitude to ecology, leading locals to suspect the Han government of tricks to annihilate them. Local Miao in a remote Western Hunan site, for example, believe that the Han government deliberately promoted plastic storage containers for corn, which were intended to stop it freezing but which allowed it to be eaten by rats. On the whole, the developmentalist perspective dominates the thinking of even local ethnic cadres, and money seems to be the common language across ethnic boundaries. I challenge this impression in Chapter 2.

The final type of mobilization is political. The key is to enforce village democracy, which is believed to be effective in resolving inter-ethnic conflict. One example often cited is Shuangbei Village in Xiangyang, Hubei, where Hans and Muslims mix residences. The village was once called "four-many village" (referring to many debts, many subsidies, many ethnic conflicts, and many physical fights). Village democratic autonomy is said to have transformed it into one of the "one hundred strong villages."[30] Successful political mobilization should succeed in electing "ethnic gentleman" (*minzu xianren*) who can both improve village economy and resolve ethnic conflicts. The Party should attend to the ethnic composition of village committees so as to make village autonomy credible to both ethnic and Han villagers.

Plan of the book

Unlike most social science books, which typically begin with a theoretical chapter, I must confess that this book does not have one single theoretical canon by which all chapters abide. To quote Edward Said,

> Human experience is finely textured, dense, and accessible enough not to need extra-historical or extra-worldly agencies to illuminate or explain it. . . . Scholars can be frankly engaged in the politics and interests of the present with open eyes, rigorous analytical energy, and the decently social values of

> those who are concerned with the survival neither of a disciplinary fiefdom or guild nor of a manipulative identity like "India" or "America," but with the improvement and non-coercive enhancement of life in a community struggling to exist among other communities.[31]

I am interested in how people struggle against constructed identities imposed on them, and how to represent true ethnicity. I care primarily about how to allow people a real voice. In other words, this is not a book that studies the similarities among people in terms of how social structures universally constrain behavior. Rather, it is a study of differences in people's practices and interpretation of a seemingly universal identity discourse. Specifically, I explore identity strategies adopted by ethnic minority groups in response to citizenship projects promoted by the state. In the process, I seek to show how relevant, or irrelevant, being a Chinese citizen is to my interviewees living in various parts of China. My assumption is that there are at least two movements at work. The first tendency is the specification of an ethnic category by the state, which then initiates programs to assimilate the ethnic people into the general population. In the second tendency, specified ethnic people respond to citizenship programs on the basis of some negotiated ethnicity. This is the product of official portrayal and local conventions combined. In this second tendency, those acting in the name of the state develop contempt towards the local ethnic culture.

Typically, ethnicity is defined in terms of blood, religion, language, and cultural proximity to the Han. The goal of the state is always to promote standard citizenship by enhancing participation in the market economy and politics. In this book, I examine how these common ethnic factors mingle with Chinese citizenship, and give a hybrid interpretation of how members of ethnic minorities become Chinese citizens. I provide as many readings as the number of the interviewed sites I selected for this research. The implication is that from a micro perspective there is no limitation on human creativity or adaptability.

In Part I, I tackle the notion of Chinese citizenship from two angles: modernity/modernization and ethnic attitudes towards village elections. My purpose is to provide multiple readings of how ethnic groups understand the meaning of citizenship. In each case I use a Taiwanese aboriginal group, the Zou, for comparison. Even though Han Taiwanese are descendants of Chinese immigrants, the Taiwanese government today claims that Taiwan is politically not part of China. The logic is that Taiwanese citizenship (in terms of market economy and electoral culture) has become modern while Chinese citizenship remains traditional. To ethnic people, however, this high tone of modernity in Taiwan has ironically promoted identity sensitivity among local tribes such as the Zou. Chapters 2 and 3 show that the main issue of concern for ethnic people is not the level of modernity of the Han authorities. Rather, it is the preservation or reconstruction of an identity under pressure of change.

I begin my case studies by first deconstructing the universality of the notion of modernity. In Part II, I report my interviews in Western Hunan, an area regarded as a highly assimilated district, in ethnic terms. However, this general

impression of the area does not help me understand the locals. I deliberately separate my chapters depending on how one wants to treat the general perception. In Chapter 4, I present stories showing how mistaken impressions of assimilation come about as a result of differentiating interviewees according to the focus of their personal concerns. In Chapter 5, I reverse the story by showing how one can actually argue the case of assimilation by using interview material from a separate, neighboring county. In other words, I show how members of the same highly assimilated group residing in different neighborhoods adopt different identity strategies.

In Part III, I again deal with two ethnic groups widely considered as highly assimilated. While local Han officials, like their superiors in the central leadership, care about mobilizing ethnic people into the state and market arenas, their responses are quite variable. The Man people discussed in Chapter 6 are not interested in their ethnic traits, revealing little feeling of being threatened as a people; the local Man talk about assimilation. In contrast, the She people of Chapter 7 continue to reflect on the meaning of being She. In this part of the book, I want to highlight the irrelevance of patriotism as a force in determining people's identity strategies and their sensitivity to the construction of ethnicity.

In Part IV, I introduce the factor of religion. But the two chapters that Part IV contains are studies not of ethnic religion *per se* but of how relevant religion is to ethnic consciousness. The religion in both cases is Islam and the ethnic groups are Uygurs and Muslims (who in China make up a separate ethnic group) respectively. The role Islam plays in these two peoples' identity strategies is quite different. Chapter 8 is a story of how Islam becomes secularized in an isolated Uygur community. Even though there has been a religious revival in recent years, some basic traits no longer exist. Chapter 9, by contrast, is a story of how Islamic identity remains strong even as local communities willingly accede to the state's citizenship projects. Negotiation with the state is unconscious and long-term as the locals successfully keep their religious identity outside the state arena.

Part V deals with language. Again, two case studies in this part provide two different pictures. Chapter 10 tells the "success" stories of various ethnic groups; some of these stories come from interviews, others from government-sponsored research projects. In Chapter 10, the implication is that assimilation and ethnicity are not incompatible. Here, education and language seem to bring minority ethnic and Han cultures closer. Chapter 11, on the Dai, suggests a different path. The language project seems to be useless for either maintaining ethnic consciousness or enhancing assimilation.

Part VI is also about education, particularly the question of school enrollment. The research in both chapters that comprise this part of the book suggests that enrollment rates are often inflated. Chapter 13 studies a Yi community in Sichuan's Liangshan Prefecture, where many parents are not responsive to the enrollment drive. The same is true of Dong parents in a southwestern Hunanese township (Chapter 12). In general, the state provides little incentive for children to join the school system. These cases differ in the sense that the

state has portrayed the local Yi culture negatively, whereas no such stereotyping takes place in Dong villages. However, Dong parents face an educational bureaucracy that refuses to provide ethnic-related curricula. In both cases, the low enrollment may have to do with the lack of ethnic substance in the so-called ethnic education.

Using interview materials from different ethnic areas, this book has as its main message that the choice of an identity strategy in China is not the result of the state's citizenship projects. Nor is it the result of factors such as religion, language, or even ethnic consciousness. In each of the six parts of this book, I juxtapose cases that provide different readings on ethnicity. As identity strategies vary, the meaning of being a Chinese citizen diverges accordingly. Without this exercise, one could not appreciate that it is fluidity as well as hybridity which allows an interpretation of Chinese citizenship that has helped China remain a territorially integrated piece of land.

I conclude this book by briefly showing why in theory China cannot be seen as a whole, using my past experiences of field research in Han as well as minority ethnic residential areas. Explaining why China is more a temporal than a territorial phenomenon is crucial because we want to know what kind of China ethnic minorities are dealing with. Without such reinterpretive exercises, I think it is impossible for me to be fair to the ethnic people I want to introduce to readers. In other words, I want to justify why I refuse to begin my ethnic research with a general, theoretical hypothesis. The conclusion will argue that there are as many varieties of village politics as there are villages and that the Communist Party itself is a momentary concept and a process rather than a concrete institution or entity. These discussions are sufficient warning that I do not try to generalize my observations in ethnic areas.

Methodology

I realize with hindsight that the methodology employed in this book is heavily influenced by Wittgenstein's practical philosophy and Gadamer's hermeneutics.[32] They both question the authenticity of any claimed reality or the utility of establishing universal abstract representation. I want to answer Spivak's provocative probing about whether the subaltern trapped in a hegemonic discursive paradigm can speak about him- or herself in a resistant and yet positive tone.[33] I find Der Derian's notion of anti-diplomacy particularly encouraging and useful in preparing a reply to Spivak.[34] Der Derian historicizes the notion of diplomacy and reads a sense of mutual estrangement into all diplomatic processes, which pose and reproduce two entities in confrontation.[35] People who cut across this constructed boundary of confrontation practice "anti-diplomacy." R. B. J. Walker creatively injects this type of anti-diplomacy into a notion of lower-case foreign policy vis-à-vis upper-case Foreign Policy between those acting only in the name of states.[36] Similarly, Habermas enlightens me with his faith in enabling true communication, even going as far as using materials from a language supposedly carrying only suffocating hegemonic messages.[37]

I therefore feel comfortable relying completely on my interviewees for pieces of information that invite multiple readings and reinterpretation. In this regard, Rey Chow's writings on her postcolonial motherland in Hong Kong,[38] Wang Der-wei's searching for responses to modernity repressed in the Qing literature,[39] Weller's rereading of resistance into temple politics in Taiwan,[40] as well as Rofel's uncovering of discrepant desires within modernity all help build my analytical confidence.[41]

The method is doubtlessly multi-sited.[42] This is an approach becoming increasingly popular, as shown in the work by Schein, Gladney, or Anagnost mentioned on p. 6. I spent over five years visiting sites in different villages many times and for different lengths of stay. During each of my visits to China, I asked to meet with as many schoolteachers, village cadres, enterprise owners, and peasant households as possible. Through the multi-sited design, I deliberately try to deconstruct myself as an outsider and avoid presenting the issue as them (ethnic) versus the state or me versus them. I do this sometimes by cutting across spaces and sharing with my interviewees insights from other sites in order to resolve problems brought up by the interviewees at the time. At other times, I cut across roles and act like a superior by disclosing ulterior practices behind "sweat talks" (talk, that overstated government achievements) to the accompanying cadres after the interview. Multi-sited research keeps me from settling with just one counter-discourse when facing the universal assimilation policy of the Chinese state. I intend not just to resist, but to open. Without one single counter-discourse directing me, I can do the opening in addition to resisting. Resisting requires the positioning of myself in the interviewee's perspective and developing one counter-discourse, while one would expect much more from opening. Opening promotes creativity through recognizing coincidence, inconsistency, and surprise, as well as limitations on humans' capacity for control.

By arguing that China cannot be meaningfully treated as an analytical unit and examining how this China has tried to reach ethnic people, I am not suggesting that sovereign China is disunited or is liable to disintegrate. On the contrary, what I am saying is that China as a territorial state can hold together precisely because of what people do outside "China moments." People must negotiate with the state about how they can satisfy it in the China moments in order to win more time to engage in their own business. My book will tell different stories of how creative ethnic people can be in handling China moments. China can be accepted as it is. This is because when the government achieves a higher degree of identification, local minorities are allowed room for possibilities outside the China moments. In short, China moments are not overwhelming. When they are overwhelming, we expect to see resistance and oppression.

Part I

The ethnic economy of citizenship

Comparison with aboriginal Taiwan

In Part I, I discuss the meaning of modernity and modernization to Chinese minorities. This part provides a philosophical position on which to base discussions in subsequent case studies. The purpose is to show that the state's citizenship projects to mobilize ethnic minorities cannot determine how its targets receive and respond to them. For the sake of comparison, I include my research on the Zou people in Taiwan in the following analysis. Political leaders in Taiwan have repeatedly asserted that Taiwan is the most modern Chinese society in the world. They believe that Taiwan serves as a role model for the Chinese mainland. What I will show in the following chapters, however, suggests that Taiwan's aboriginal groups are not being modernized in the way their Han government thinks they are. This parallels the situation on the mainland, where ethnic minorities respond to modernization with perspectives not shared by the Han authorities. Whether or not Taiwan is more modern than the Chinese mainland is not relevant to the identity strategies employed by the minorities. My focus is on collectivism, its constraint on the meaning of modernization, and the various forms of collectivism practiced in different groups.

In order to understand whether the development of a market economy, or "marketization," in China is likely eventually to lead to westernization, it is necessary to find a society where people still maintain some discursive room outside the prevailing modernization discussion and therefore have available a choice among contradicting discourses when trying to make sense of modernization. In Chapter 2, I present interviews I conducted in four minority areas (three in China, one in Taiwan) for this purpose. The response to modernization in the minority villages I visited is a mixture of Western, Chinese, and ethnic discourses. The villagers in my sample recognize the earning of money as a widespread motive for other people's behavior. However, they believe that individual money-making does not always preclude a collective style of pursuing business. From how people interpret the market economy to how they evaluate their own performance, we know that a market economy as locally conceived is not necessarily a Western market economy. There are various ways of reminding villagers of the values of collectivism, and measures are still taken to continue with collective activity. In general, the interviewees have devised a discursive strategy to deny the possibility that collectivism will die off in a market economy. Finally, while collectivism

may carry a variety of meanings, it is a response to the perception of rising marketization.

Democratization of ethnic minority villages is not conceptually distinguishable from that in Han villages, probably because democratization is conceived of as universal progress regardless of the country or ethnic origin of the areas under study. In Chapter 3, I report on a number of interviews with local minority scholars and cadres at the township as well as the village level. They include three minority areas in China and one in Taiwan. The chapter draws a comparison between these ethnic groups. Both China and Taiwan possess "human relational" culture, although the latter is institutionally more democratic in politics and more liberal in economics than the former. The similarities among them are significant. First of all, electoral competition is not held to be of value in any of these ethnic villages; integration and unity are the major concerns. Competing on the human relational front is more typical than intra-system campaigning. The anxiety over loss of social control is a built-in element of democracy, not a constraint on it. The family and kinship organizations are by far the most influential factors in election-related discourse. Even though people no longer blindly follow the family position, the repeated reference to unity or consensus implies a worldview where the meaning of life begins in the family, the tribe, and the kinship group instead of the individual. Electoral politics has not yet changed fundamental thinking on the priority of the collective over the individual, despite the widespread belief that holding elections will create an individualistic culture.

2 Becoming modern in Chinese and Taiwanese minority areas?

Why ethnic perspectives?

Modernization may not be the same as marketization, but a country isolated from the world market has limited potential for modernization. The two concepts are clearly linked, however, for the development of a market economy tends to lead to a plural, civil society.[1] Unfortunately for late-developing countries, the global market system currently in place relegates them to the role of supplier of cheap labor and raw materials. In the case of China, whose leaders are not satisfied with this peripheral role, modernization must mean something more than just marketization. In order for China to eventually enjoy the status of a strong, developed state, modernization must somehow influence the people's value system as well. This is the juncture where marketization and westernization inevitably meet; we might ask: are modern values simply Western values? Whatever position one takes on this meeting, the prevailing question still up in the air is whether or not westernization is a necessary condition for marketization. The Chinese official position is definitely "no," but many China-watchers suspect the answer may be unavoidably "yes."[2] In this chapter, I want to dig beneath this question and look into the richness of the meaning of marketization in China.

Marketization and westernization do not necessarily reinforce each other in reality. Historically, however, both have been indicators of modernization in China. Starting in the late Qing dynasty, there was debate between so-called westernizers and Chinese indigenizers. Commentators as well as revolutionary leaders have since expediently treated the Western and the Chinese cultures as two opposing systems, each with clear boundaries and internal consistency. Westernization first referred to the introduction of weapons technology; later it meant the introduction of Western institutions and concepts into Chinese politics for the purpose of developing a strong state. This explains why modernization is not separable from the notion of westernization even today for many of those who still long for a strong state.[3]

When the Communist Party came to power in 1949, westernization became anathema ideologically. But the reform that started in the late 1970s continued to enlist the modernization discourse in the well-known Four Modernizations campaign. Marketization in its very rudimentary and various insinuating forms

emerged to substantiate the claim of modernization in the 1980s. Subsequent political, ideological struggles have again centered on whether or not marketization is also westernization.[4] It is with this broad discursive background that this chapter embarks on its analysis.

However, the chapter is not solely about the relationship between marketization and westernization. It is an attempt to address the discursive incapacity of the political state to express the hybrid nature of current marketization policy, begun in 1992. The meaning of marketization that goes beyond the substitution of modern values for traditional norms is entirely missing in the official presentation of economic reform. As a result, in my past field trips to village schools and enterprises I witnessed a quick shift of jargons, as if every move taken by the local cadres were completely motivated by an orientation towards market competition. I question how authentic the shift has been, watching families and communities behave in ways that are compatible with pre-socialist values, though camouflaged by a marketization rationale. The chapter is therefore additionally aimed at providing a voice for behavior that carries multiple meanings not expressible through the modernization discourse.

My goal is not just political but has an empirical foundation in the literature. A few studies show that despite having entered the market, or even dominating a portion of it, Chinese businesspeople have yet to internalize the core liberal market values.[5] In the process of economic development, key liberal institutions such as property rights, judicial independence, rights to political participation, and habeas corpus have yet to become major concerns.[6] Early scholarship sees this resistance as a denial of the Western model and argues that authoritarianism can be an alternative to liberalism.[7] The economic success of some of the Asian countries has led to an "Asian model" argument that is bitterly critical of liberalism.[8] Some scholars conclude with the observation of an "illiberal democracy" in the region,[9] while others find no conflict between Confucianism and market development.[10] The literature nonetheless seems to indicate that most scholars continue to believe that the course of economic development and growth will eventually change the world in general[11] and the Chinese social landscape in particular,[12] and create a system familiar to Western market practitioners.

Determining the potential for westernization in the Chinese marketplace is similar to asking what will be the fate of indigenous values in the future. While the degree of difference in market and organizational behavior between Western and Chinese businesspeople is an empirically disputable point, there should be little argument that their assumptions about human relationships within society are distinctively different. Liberal analysis typically adopts methodological individualism and treats individual behavior as the primary focus of research. In contrast, most Chinese observers tend to interpret actions in terms of the collectivistic requirements of human relations or ancestor worship. Liberal analysis defines one's action as a means of enhancing personal happiness, while collectivistn conceives of it as a derivative of a social necessity beyond personal preference.

With a state-promoted policy of reform and openness to the outside world dominant in China, it is difficult to study effectively the motive behind each market maneuver. Certain business practices deemed inappropriate within a Western capitalist society are considered commonplace in China, such as abusing the "empty head" principle (or *kongtou* – i.e. running one's own board of trustees or acquiring stock in relatives' or friends' names vicariously in order to shun quota or tax regulations). Respect for individual rights is not a fundamental concern to the majority, who have no qualms about having friends or relatives use their names for deeds of which they have little knowledge or control. Taiwan serves as a good case for comparison with China because of its much higher level of market development, but witnesses similar, if not greater, use of *kongtou*. On the other hand, ordinary people's indoctrination to and familiarity with the liberal discourse in Taiwan have deprived the Taiwanese of a cognitive tool with which to make sense of the anomalies. People would rather interpret them in a well-versed individualistic tone than devise a new discourse for these endemic anomalies. The same situation is occurring in China. As the media focus more attention on individuals who have profited financially, collectivism seems either irrelevant or outdated in explaining individual economic behavior.

It is thus necessary to find a community where people keep some discursive room outside the prevailing modernization and marketization discourse and therefore have maintained a choice between conflicting discourses when trying to make sense of modernization. The choice between the modernization discourse and the collectivistic discourse alludes to relationships between the market and human relations. A choice of the collectivistic discourse may suggest that the market is not an adequate substitute for human relations. Only the existence of some discursive room can allow observers to touch on the issue of motivation and meaningfully explore the potential of genuine westernization in China.

One possible type of research site, therefore, is one in a minority area. Minority peasants, like Han villagers, are acquainted with collectivist values. Many minorities live in remote mountain areas, but marketization would presumably lure them down and bring them into contact with Han businesspeople, exposing them to an awareness of Western values and opening up the possibility of cultural assimilation into the Han majority. The dual exposure to the Han and the West, accompanied by an ethnic discourse of their own, enables minority villagers to be more cognizant of their claimed uniqueness, to the extent that it becomes more evident. In turn, they can be alerted to the intrusion of the modernization discourse. They conveniently explain their own profit-driven behavior by citing values incompatible with a Western-style market. This discursive leverage should give observers a better opportunity to evaluate the fate of collectivism vis-à-vis liberal individualism. The following sections center on the dialogue between two discourses: modernization and collectivism. Collectivism is loosely defined to include all human relational needs, collective identities, and a commonsense understanding of socialism, class-consciousness, and patriotism.[17]

Construction of category and dichotomy

To discuss modernization in China requires the use of and reference to a number of categories and dichotomies that are not themselves justifiable. As stated earlier, I have touched on at least four dichotomies: the Chinese versus the Western, the Chinese versus the non-Chinese, liberal individualism versus collectivism, and the Han versus ethnic minorities. Before I report on my research trips to ethnic areas, it is important to make the disclaimer that I have no intention of reproducing or consolidating these dichotomies. In fact, when we go through all interviews I quote from, we will inevitably find that all these categories may carry multiple meanings, to the extent that, for example, collectivism may carry a wide range of meanings to different interviewees. Collectivism can refer to patriotism, community development, compulsory work, unity among members of an ethnic group, collective ownership, ethnic traits, and traditional social norms. These do not necessarily contradict one another, but some mean much more to some people than to others.

As mentioned earlier, while modernization inevitably connotes westernization in Chinese discourse, on many occasions the dichotomy of Chinese/Western cannot hold. Imperialism, against which China becomes a meaningful symbol to those carrying the memory of the Opium War or the Boxer Rebellion, had undertaken all kinds of "civilizing" projects inside Chinese sovereign borders before revolutionary leaders learned to appreciate the notion of China being a sovereign state. With imperialist legacies everywhere within China, anti-imperialism was inevitably a self-cleansing work doomed to fail. In fact, numerous psychological tests have proved that students in Hong Kong and Taiwan can easily score high on both a modernization scale and a traditional scale as long as the survey questions are presented separately to them.[14] In other words, the traditional is still contemporary with, and not opposite to, modernization.

Similarly, "Western" carries both the positive meaning of modernization and the negative meaning of imperialism. This is why the question of whether or not marketization necessarily leads to westernization is a legitimate concern to most of those who consider themselves living with the historical shame of being invaded. As my interviews will show later, "Western" can also imply a sense of loss for Bai women, for example, or a religious practice for Zou tribes. The dichotomy of Chinese versus Western has probably arisen from political practices which reproduce the dichotomy that in turn allows them to continue their practices. In short, the dichotomy is intrinsic to the concept of "China." When I refer to China later, it should therefore be understood in a loosely defined territorial sense, not as an essentializing cultural mass.

Similarly, the dichotomy of Chinese versus non-Chinese is problematic. Collectivism, which is a critical factor in my interpretation of the meaning of marketization, is not unique to China. Communitarianism can be found in non-Chinese literature, or among moral peasants in the non-Chinese third world. The inclusion of a research site in Taiwan in this book further testifies to the unhelpful nature of the dichotomy. On the one hand, Taiwan is distinctively

different from China in its Japanese postcolonial experience and the Taipei authorities' political dependence on Washington. More important, probably, is Taipei's allegedly total assimilation into Western political culture. On the other hand, the following sections will show how similar Chinese ethnic interviewees are to the Zou people in Taiwan, who have been struggling with the process of modernization in their attempt to maintain ethnic consciousness by, ironically, worrying about its disappearance. The major common factor is the perception of rising individualism caused by marketization, which is conceived of as reflecting the loss of ethnic consciousness. Since members of ethnic minorities in Taiwan and China are comparable in the amount of discursive room they allow for collectivism, it is not clear where to draw the boundary of "China" against the non-Western foreign.

However, I also want to question this nostalgia for collectivism, not in the sense that the nostalgia is not felt or is unreal, but to the extent that collectivism is composed of nostalgia. Without the nostalgia for collectivism, collectivism loses its power to unite members of ethnic minorities. Nostalgia is an element in maintaining collectivism, in whatever forms, and collectivism is an element in maintaining ethnic consciousness. Nostalgia as a response to the individualistic proclivity of marketization is itself a constructed effect. Moreover, the perceived individualistic proclivity is hardly the same kind of liberal individualism as marketization, for, as I will demonstrate, the concept of property rights is lacking in the areas where I carried out my interviews. The observation that the reference to collectivism or its variations is a cognitive tool to maintain ethnic consciousness leads to the possibility that the rhetoric of non-Western modern values is no more than a strategic position against the West. Since this West is conceived of as representative of individualism, and individualism is not extant in China, the dichotomy of collectivism/individualism is predicated on the prospect of westernization.

The dichotomy of Han versus ethnic minorities equally, if not more so, serves the need to maintain a sense of being Chinese. First of all, "minority" had been a non-existent term before revolutionary leaders decided that China should be a sovereign state. It is the awareness of the borders that transforms the aliens previously living on the frontier (*bianjiu*) into minority citizens loyal to the state. I have discussed this process in the Introduction, which concerns how the categorization of minority has prompted the state to undertake various "civilizing" projects, including marketization, since the 1980s.[15] This explains the aforementioned discursive incapacity of the state to appreciate meanings of modernization that blend the modern and the traditional; the cognitive refusal to acknowledge this makes it easy to maintain the wholeness of China in the face of the West. Also important is the implication that ethnic minorities, starting from different historical points, will eventually end up in the uni-direction of modernization. The respect for ethnic difference in state policy is conducive to the perception that minorities are gradually becoming modern under the "civilizing" projects the state provides. In reality, however, such projects often backfire by enhancing ethnic consciousness.[16]

The major part of the following pages is a discussion of how some members of ethnic minorities seem to exploit this difference in order to secure a position for themselves as well as their fellow ethnic members in a fast-changing environment. When they begin to extend and capitalize on this difference and sell it back to the state, some sort of "reflexive Orientalism" takes place, in which "orientalized" subalterns strategically identify with orientalizing projects to gain a sense of security in the face of the imposition of market value by the orientalizing state agent.[17] This suggests that it is more appropriate to regard both Chineseness and ethnicity as temporal instead of spatial concepts since they depend on periodic references in order to continue to have meaning (see Chapter 1). Ethnicity becomes a hotter issue under "civilizing" projects. This is welcome in the sense that the "civilizing" mission enlivens the category of Han. If minorities had remained alien, there would have been no such projects and the Han Chinese would have to ask themselves the meaning of being Chinese. Now that everyone is a citizen, those in the "backward," non-Han category learn and respond to their ethnicity as the supposedly advanced Han citizens lose the discourse about their alienation in the process of marketization.

While my research sites are all minority societies, this book is not a study of ethnology or historiography. I have no intention of testing any existing anthropological theory, or of establishing a new one. The purpose is to discern the discursive strategy or strategies of the locals in resolving the differences between marketization and collectivism, particularly the extent to which the former is substituting for the latter. I want to argue that if the substitution is dubious in the locals' description of their practical behavior, then the prevailing marketization discourse in Han areas can be deceptive. The implication is that ethnic groups and the Han are not different in their adaptation to marketization. The difference in discursive strategy only reflects the need of the ethnic group to maintain a distinctive identity vis-à-vis Han.

Minorities as categories of human beings are products of repeated practices of previous interpretations and assumptions. I am not interested in repeating the literature on how official ethnic policy has consolidated these categories.[18] Minority, as a concept, is not useful to me. But it is useful to those in the category to develop responses to their identity specification. These responses are not detectable to those acting in the name of the state, because of their preoccupation with market reform or their lack of interest in the preservation of values seemingly useless to marketization. Neither am I trying to argue that ethnic minorities can cope with westernization better than the Han, who should now look to minorities for inspiration.[19]

In my research, I deliberately avoided any formal structure to the interviews and provided no instruction to the interviewees. The first question was always how the interviewee reached his or her current position. To ensure that interviewees did focus on personal concerns rather than on tangential matters, I refrained from intruding on their train of thought by developing all the subsequent questions from answers given to previous questions. I acquired the remarks on modernization, which I quote later, from an *ex post* reading and

extraction of the recorded interviews. The research was conducted in Lijiang, Yunnan, with the Naxi minority group (three interviewees); in Dali, Yunnan, with the Bai minority group (four interviewees); in Yongshuen, Hunan, with the Tujia minority group (nine interviewees); and in Ali Mountain, Chiayi, with the Zou minority group (eleven interviewees). Interviewing with open-ended questions and escorted by local cadres, I was fortunate to have the opportunity to converse with a number of local scholars, leaders, and general managers of factories. In regard to the economic situation of each minority group, the Bai are better off economically than those arround them, with the Tujia being the worst off. The Zou reside in Taiwan, while the rest are in mainland China. My former colleague Dr. Chao-chi Shan, who left academia in January 1998, was mainly in charge of the interviews with the Zou.

About the "money economy"

Most interviewees recognize the importance of economic growth and that participation in the market is the key to achieving this growth. Interestingly, while all the minority groups in my study live in a market economy and share the same goal of economic development, they use the terms "market" or "economics" only to interpret other people's behavior. No one sees themself as profit-driven. In addition, when speaking of economics, they touch more on the concepts of profit or income than on property or property rights. To them, the word "market" is a term almost interchangeable with "profit."

Needless to say, the opposite of a market economy in China is central planning. Some interviewees specifically pointed this out, lauding the fact that the government no longer commands enterprises. Each enterprise must write its own plan, but this is at best a "micro-plan compared with the nation," according to Mr Peng, the general manager of Yongshuen Tobacco. He observes that the state "lets the small enterprises be self-sustaining" and even "encourages private business." For him, the term "market," an antonym in reference to the state, is closely related to private enterprise as well as tax exemption. He considers taxing to be no more than money-taking by the state:

> "In the past, employment meant that a state enterprise recruited you. Now it means that you have a job to do. We added the term 'socialism' to 'market,' but the reality is exclusively market. The only difference [in China] is that the Communist Party is still the ruling party. We are in a [Tujia autonomous] district; as long as we pay an enterprise tax, no one cares about [what we do with] the remaining profit. People here used to be poor. [The state] cannot take money from them. In theory, we should have paid [additional] income tax. In Western Hunan, we couldn't emphasize any special characteristics; everything had to be incorporated into an international economy. Reform has created a middle class. We need ten more years until people from Mao's epoch all retire from enterprise posts. Young people can adapt to new thinking and react really quickly."

In contrast, there has never been a planned economy in Shanmei village in Ali Mountain County in Taiwan's Chiayi County. Recent development and investment in the construction of popular attractions is a new phenomenon to villagers. One local leader feared that he could not "wake up the villagers fast" enough. When villagers responded, he found that the notion of long-term investment was not taken into account in the initial stages of development. He recalled that villagers in the mountain are unfortunately like bees acting as a whole: "whenever someone makes money, everyone does the same thing, such as althaea-planting." Investment in human capital is an equally foreign concept. Mr Wen, general secretary of the Shanmei Association of Community Development, complained that only money could motivate the youth. They organized a youth society in Shanmei, but the members were inactive and since its inception have only "pounded the table to demand money to run it." According to him, students graduating from junior high school refuse to go to senior high school precisely because they "want to make money quickly, not think about their future." General Secretary Chuang of the Commission on Promoting Tourism in Shanmei worried:

> "People's hearts have begun to change. Today's mobilizing challenge is no match for the past. If we don't pay, mobilization is probably not going to work. For example, if we need to perform a dance now, but we don't have money to pay this time, you will notice that those who came last time and received payment for their performance will not show up this time but will return once we have money to pay them."

How to make money fast was a common concern for all the minorities interviewed. Villagers are keen about a potential leader's ability to make money. Mr He, a Naxi scholar in Lijiang, recalling an election for village cadres, stated that villagers look "primarily for the ability to run the economy. Despite some obvious personal defects [of the elected], a good old pal is not going to win." The interviewees often easily came up with stories of economic success. Mr Ding, a Bai scholar in Dali, told of one of his favorite examples of how a modern person can succeed in the market:

> "There once was a very impressive woman. She had only an elementary school diploma but had an enormous drive to make money. She was interested in technology and taught herself broadcasting skills. Once she heard about automated chicken farms and she spent her own savings to learn more about it, but failed to do so. Then she wanted to plant watermelons and bought a lot of books on the subject, but failed again. She tried repeatedly and is now the queen of watermelon. She is now beginning to plant grapes. All this represents her modernization ideas."

In Shanmei, the drive to make money via the market is also evident. Mr Chuang described how Zou villagers learn to enter the market by observing those who

can make money. Gradually there emerges a willingness to invest in community development for the sake of better market opportunities:

> "Development of tourism was too fast for our relatively weak [infrastructure] to support. Every Saturday and Sunday one can witness the traffic in the mountains. Besides, there was only one restaurant for dining [when we started it]. We just started the business and had no idea of how to handle so many customers pouring in. The other villagers who were not engaged in business were watching [us] out there, thinking, 'Boy, what a flood of customers! How come they are the only people making money?' They all believed there were only a few people making money. Gradually this changed. People began to think that this was the direction of development for Shanmei Village and that when roads are broadened and paved in the future, tourists will pour in again. Before that happens, shouldn't we do some preparation? This was what later caused people to contribute more to community development."

Interviewees all witnessed the social evolution caused by the spread of the "money economy." For our purpose, this is not the same as modernization, yet it is arguably the first step towards modernization. Currently, the incentive to earn money and money itself are familiar topics among the minorities. At the same time, ambivalence towards, or even apology for, the "money economy" is a typical reaction to modernization everywhere in China, as well as Taiwan. This attitude appears to be the same in minority villages as it is in Han villages. The more substantive questions are how people make sense of this phenomenon and whether or not notions of money and profit will lead to individualistic values. I did not collect specific information on this. Instead, it is useful to see how interviewees portray local development in light of historical progress.

Progress or regress?

The most noticeable progress lies in the abundance of goods available for household consumption and villagers' capacity to profit from the production of these new goods. Mr Tian, a municipal staff member in Dali, commented:

> "The Bai culture is very advanced, so it is rather easy to introduce new technology. We planted rice in the past, then started planting corn. In our traditional villages, we produced over 300 *jin* per acre each year [originally]; now we have reached 800 to 1000 *jin* per acre. The masses saw the result of applying new technology and decided to promote it. People have enhanced their economic income."

Similarly, Mr Chuang recalled seeing only a few automobiles in Shanmei ten years ago; today, almost every household has a car. In 1979, there was a total of three motorcycles.

More relevant to our discussion is whether or not there has been any progress in the non-material aspects of society. Mr Peng, for example, believes in the socialist idea that material and non-material progress go hand in hand. (This was the most orthodox party line in the remotest mountain city, Yongshuen, yet I learned how to put modernization in an appropriate context.) Dressed in a Western suit, he recalled that Western suits were rare before 1985, but people's attitudes toward Western dress changed after 1985. Deng Xiaoping's tour of Guangdong in 1992 was considered the second breakthrough in thought reform, and the opening of the Fifteenth Party Congress in 1998 was the third. (Here he echoed the official position.) He proclaims that the thought of the Chinese people is booming today, with the goal nevertheless being tangible material progress — in other words, to catch up with the United States within twenty years. Mr Peng thinks that past emphasis on Chinese national characteristics have contributed to modernization today:

> "Eighteen years ago, the level of consumption was rather low. We were preoccupied with promoting national characteristics. Population migration was low. Now it is open and national characteristics don't matter. Mao Zedong influenced us in the past, so we could keep our national characteristics on the one hand, but also accept modern thinking on the other. Without his teaching, reform, and thought, liberation would be impossible. Without factories being built during the Great Leap Forward, we would not have our factory today. It brought enormous impacts on mountain villages and trained a lot of people."

Probably sincere in his remarks, Mr Peng testified to a nationalistic sensitivity that the market is not just about making money. As he painstakingly argued, modernization is a form of progress based on past nationalism. He appeared to want to give a socialist legitimacy to modernization. As it is understood in Shanmei, collectivism of this sort carries a very different meaning. It is collectivism, nonetheless, to the extent that it downplays the role of individual.

Other, more localized observations provide multiple readings of progress. They hold a more sophisticated concept of the market by adding the notion of balanced or all-round development. Another Mr Tian, a county director in Yongshuen and also a Tujia, noticed that after a while villagers are not preoccupied with making money. They are more concerned with "how to develop in the future if, in ten years, their oranges don't sell as well as today." Community development has increasingly become a concern in Shanmei, where villagers willingly share work that will give the village a better image. Concerns for community development in Shanmei as well as in Yongshuen link each individual producer to all the other villagers. They have been taking advantage of market opportunities together, producing the same fruit or service, and collectively bargaining with buyers or sellers. Although everyone earns his or her own money, they do it together. Money may have been the initial stimulus, but the villagers consequently re-evaluated their true objectives.

Ms Pu, a Zou leader, praised her villagers' enlightened perspective on community development:

> "When environmental preservation and tourism helped Shanmei achieve its goal of development, they not only met the expectation of economic growth, but also stimulated the villagers to enhance the quality of their lives in all aspects, such as environmental protection and standard of living. In other words, villagers can envision alternative development strategies to attract more people to come to Shanmei instead of making quick money. They think in the long term. Little by little, their thinking is growing more and more mature."

In addition to material accumulation and making money, another alleged value change concerns birth control. Birth control is a state policy in China, but in some areas minority couples are allowed more than one child if they do not live in a city. Mr He finds that minorities that are small in terms of population size are not receptive to birth control. Although the government has control in a general sense, in specific areas transformation of people's way of thinking lacks any economic foundation. Once economics takes off, values may change spontaneously, according to Mr Ding, who explained the situation of the Bai villagers in Dali:

> "Birth control is completely a matter of economic development and is difficult to promote in mountains and villages. If you have a few more boys, you will not worry about whether or not people will take advantage of you when you run into certain predicaments. The changes occurring in the past eight years have been quite impressive. I presented a paper on Bai women at the World Women's Congress held the year before. I studied Zhoucheng County, where the local economy has developed quickly. They all think one child is quite adequate and believe that more children would slow economic development. In the past, the Bai were known for their stubborn adherence to their own conventions, traditions, and beliefs. The transformation has been occurring during the past few years. Our country has smoothly resolved a lot of problems through economic development."

To what extent changes in the value system of the villagers can be attributed to economic development, and to what extent one can claim that capitalism has advanced within China and Taiwan, are questions worthy of further research. In fact, village democracy, which has been promoted recently, has not benefited from economic growth. On the contrary, the same people who praise economic development often refrain from commenting too extensively on the village autonomous system. For example, Mr He thinks that the drawing up of a village compact,[30] an essential element of village autonomy, depends greatly on the ability to fine villagers. But the power to fine is limited, since most villagers, according to Mr Peng, are poor. In Yongshuen, Mr Sheng, a relative of Shengjiazhai Village's

director, acknowledged that villagers typically run away to coastal areas or simply hide in neighboring villages to give birth illicitly.

Two other signs suggest that the economic argument about changing values is problematic. First, the major policy failure in some of the areas visited concerns birth control, and the village compact always imposes a heavy fine for breaking the birth quota. It is difficult to tell whether or not the birth control policy has been successful and, if it is successful, whether that is on account of the changes in the value system or because of the fining policy. Second, in Zhoucheng County and Yongshuen County, I observed that many villages shared a similar, highly simplistic village compact. In such villages, the compact is a document written from the top down, in which birth control is just another specified state policy. More evidence is needed for us to be able to argue that birth control reflects changes in values rather than state enforcement. It is possible that in order to achieve a cognitive balance, minority groups use the appearance of a change in values to rationalize behavioral changes that comply with policy mandates.

Finally, economic development may also carry some regressive message. For example, Mr Li, a Bai university professor, commented that in history the Bai were more advanced than the Han in terms of doing business, but because of policy failures of the central government in the past few decades: "the underdeveloped Han nation comes around to teach the advanced Bai nation." From a cyclical historical point of view, Li thinks, "the Han culture is not necessarily the most advanced." Li's criterion of being advanced is both market and ethnic oriented. To take another example, the Naxi minority group has experienced a significant change in its traditional dialect. For one thing, marketization requires a common language. Education, the key to improving human capital, is given only in Chinese, and so is the college entrance examination (except in Manchuria, where Korean nationals are allowed to use their own language for the national examination). This dramatically lowers the utility of the Naxi dialect, and expending a great deal of time to learn it becomes a liability in the marketplace. Both the cyclical view of Li and the regressive view of the Naxi are ethnic in nature. If we understand Peng's earlier remark in terms of Chinese nationalism, it would appear that progress or regress is a matter of assertion. Peng sees progress as coming about by positioning the Tujia minority group within the greater Chinese nation, whereas Li and He do not. Nonetheless, either position is collective in essence.

Another Mr He, also a Naxi scholar in Lijiang, acknowledges that he can only "worry helplessly about the lack of interest in the Naxi dialect." He observes the regressive trend from an ethnic point of view:

> "Just five years ago, there weren't many immigrants in Lijiang, which was still an intimate society. When Han people came to Lijiang, they had to learn the Naxi dialect in order to survive. Naxi people running into one another would use the Naxi dialect, not caring how the rest would feel. Han people simply became Naxi after living in Lijing for a few generations. Now it is

Plate 1 A Naxi ritual that honors the tree god, Lijiang, Yunan

> completely different. Economics is responsible for sending people here and there. You cannot use the Naxi dialect in this space of interaction. First, you don't know whether you are dealing with a Naxi. You have to speak Chinese first. Only after you discern that the other person is a Naxi would you use the Naxi dialect."

Although my interpretation of remarks from the interviews is not systematic, and allowing for the fact that collectivism varies in its meaning to different interviewees, there does seem to be real anxiety about the contradiction between the individual and the collective. To perceive a change in values is also, therefore, a way to shun the possibly embarrassing confrontation between personal behavior and group mentality. Peng can argue that Mao's Great Leap Forward, disastrous as it was, contributed to the present modernization efforts, so modernization does not mean a movement away from collectivism. Similarly, for Ding (in Dali), the Bai women have jettisoned, not betrayed, their "stubborn tradition," and so it appears irrelevant if they really do not want a second child. On the other hand, community development is a creative way of avoiding the contradiction between earning individually and doing collectively. The ultimate test would be to determine whether ethnic identity is fundamentally threatened by emerging individualism and how to deal with it if it is. Some possible options are to adopt a broader identification fostered by Chinese nationalism or to strengthen indigenous ethnic identities. The later option is what I focus on in the following section.

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About collectivism

Wary and ambivalent towards all the negatives arising from the market economy, some Zou leaders question the wisdom of development. A third Mr Chuang, an elementary school teacher once opposed to tourism, commented:

> "In the past, because lives here were backward and closed to the outside world, one was clear about social norms. Being clear about norms gave you peace of mind in social exchanges [because social behavior was predictable]. The old and the young knew their places. When adults needed to work in the mountains, kids would stay at home, you know. You did not need to beg your neighbors to take care of them, they would do it naturally. When it rained, they took your half-dry clothes inside. When it was dark, they bathed your kids and fed them, you know."

Not only is there nostalgia for past lifestyles, but there are also new worries. Shanmei villagers watched developers monopolize all the resources in neighboring tourist spots, relegating the Zou people to cooking food or preparing rooms.

The old lifestyle could not persist, however. Looking back, the general impression among Shanmei interviewees is that had it not been for tourism, villagers' labor would have continued to be exploited. Planting agricultural crops was the only alternative to tourism back then, and even that activity was dependent on the Han dealers to sell the harvest. There was no organization of indigenous producers. The lesson was not to avoid tourism, which might allow the Han further opportunities for exploitation, but to organize villagers to prevent exploitation. Other interviewees acknowledged that making money is a matter of community unity, not of individual endeavor. Unity can help preserve resources for the locals.

I think the remarks of the Shanmei villagers, as well as those of the local minority leaders in mainland China quoted earlier in the chapter, show that they far too easily equate the market with money, with no attention being paid to associated elements of the market such as modern financial institutions, property rights, or even political participation. If I may discuss my own concerns in more detail here, I believe the other, overlooked elements have a highly individualistic underpinning. Local leaders are more disposed towards a development or comparison that is based on community, or some other collective unit, and they particularly want to talk about social achievements outside, though perhaps linked to, the market. In fact, collectivism of this sort in minority villages is not far from practices in Han villages.

In almost all the affluent Han villages I visited earlier in Beijing, Tianjin, Wuhan, and Shanghai, social welfare and schooling were among the first things locals mentioned in interviews. Many villages manifest a strong collective cultural style. Some village councils, for example, are directly in charge of both the paying of expenses and the work of collective house-building or renovation, the extension of phone lines and installation of television antennas, the celebration of the new year, and various investments and construction projects. Others do not pay but

participate in the coordination of the work. There is a general tendency in Han villages to demonstrate the continuance of collectivism, thus indicating a deep-seated anxiety about the individualization of life caused by market development.

In comparison, one can see different degrees of collective materialistic development in minority villages similar to the Han villages I visited, the exception being that minority villages are not as prosperous. For example, minority village councils also claim to prioritize the allocation of surpluses to old, disabled, and young people. The distribution of surplus has less to do with charity than with social norms. This is a recognized convention among all the Chinese people I have interviewed in China. Yongshun's Mr Tian commented:

> "Widows are particularly taken care of, in accordance with our Chinese conventions. We have a county-sponsored old people's home, where the government hires employees to take care of the senior citizens and each senior receives a monthly allowance. . . . Village councils prepare gifts and tea for those over 70, depending on their financial situation. Their electricity is free. Village cooperatives also assist by covering their medical expenses. If it costs too much, we seek help from the central government agency."

Children also receive special care. Mr Xie, a principal at Diaojin Elementary School in Yongshen, pointed out that the villagers support the school with their planting of kiwi fruit. Mr Wang, village director of Zanzhu Village in Lingxi Township, Yongshuen, also mentioned all kinds of support the village council gives to their school, and to the employment of teachers and himself. Mr Wang stated that all the mass organizations within the village, including the village council, must constantly find a way to resolve their financial problems. Beyond looking for help from the government, he points to the direction all village councils try, which is to run collective village enterprises.

As in many Han villages, and typically of a collective lifestyle, compulsory work is required of the villagers. In Zanzhu, villagers contribute on average twenty days each year. As in the market, where individual earning is combined with collective doing, other productive work is of the same kind. Mr Tian organizes the compulsory work days around the revitalization of the rice field, so the new rice field becomes collective property. On the other hand, he allows each compulsory worker to take the rice from the part of the field he has worked, in the hopes of providing material incentives for compulsory work. In Shanmei, compulsory work is not production but environmental protection, including night patrolling around Danuoyi Valley to protect the unique gufish from being stolen as an exotic food for tourists. Shanmei's compulsory work is interesting because it raises new social expectations. For example, residents of Shanmei can no longer catch gufish, as they had done for generations, because of the rising environmentalist consciousness and the ensuing communal norms. If patrols apprehend anyone catching gufish, the penalty must be particularly heavy in order to deter others. In the beginning, this was a tough decision because environmental thinking was not familiar to elderly people in the villages, who cared more about social harmony

Plate 2 A sign warning against fishing and swimming in the Zou's Danuoyi Valley. Ali Moutain, Jiayi, Taiwan

than the gufish. Mr An, an activist and leader in gufish tourism, recalled that the most difficult thing they faced was to persuade the elderly. Finally, the village assembly passed a regulation to fine people who stole the fish. The first culprit turned out not to be a Han but a Zou cadre. The compulsory nature of the environmental work provided the legitimacy for enforcing the regulation. An unidentified source left the following record:

> "It was unexpected that the first suspect caught was one of our own cadres. The regulation had just recently been implemented, so not many people abided by it. Many broke it. Yet think about this: the priest took children with nets and flashlights and hiked high into the dark mountains to find gufish eggs for us. Since they sacrificed time and energy, how could people still steal? The culprits all had some sort of relationship with our leaders. This was a tough situation, but we enforced the penalty anyway. A lot of young people at the time accused us of lacking human compassion."
>
> "The neighboring Han from the plains usually came to steal gufish around the new year festival. That was a season of gufish theft. We had to patrol the Danuoyi Valley twenty-four hours a day. The youth in our mountains made up the major part of the patrol team and worked with village cadres. At that time, not only was there no compensation, there was not even money to buy a meal box for them."

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Now that Shanmei Village has grown, there is a new concern. Local leaders do not want to create a habit of dependence among the ordinary villagers, who contribute less to community development but receive a share of the benefits. This is an interesting concern that has not been brought to my attention in other Chinese villages experiencing a similar economic boom, although the authorities in Beijing have been promoting a similar self-help theme throughout the country. In Shanmei, dependence means two negative things. First, since Shanmei attributes much of its growth to tourism, villagers should be aware that they need to create other opportunities during the off-season; it is unwise to depend entirely on a seasonal income. How to diversify one's source of income is a frequent concern in other villages as well. Second, and more importantly, one should not depend on the community to resolve all problems. In other words, while village development should not leave out any particular group of villagers, neither should it allow any particular group to abuse collectivism. The following comment is consistent with the spirit of communitarian collectivism:

> "All the income earned is redistributed to villagers. On the whole, the community account shows a loss, not a profit. We said in the beginning that our goal was to let villagers benefit from each other's work. Whenever [tourism] thrives and a lot is earned, villagers ask to share this profit. Accordingly, we set up scholarships and various allowances for marriage, childbirth, schooling, a senior citizens' club and medical care, etc. This is what we mean by sharing. Now, when we do this, we want to keep villagers from developing a dependency mentality."

It is interesting to take note of the particular things people do not care about as opposed to what they do care about. In the development of a market economy, many villagers seemed to care least about their individual rights. Mr Shi, a Bai cadre in Dali, witnessed a city boy arriving in the village to purchase identification cards. He needed the cards in order to bypass government regulations in the stock market, and paid 100 renminbi for each card. For the villagers in the mountains, who never use their cards, this was good business. The ID card market is a market in which individual rights of name and property do not exist. For the Bai villagers in this particular example, the market means no more than the opportunity to make money. The significance of this case is that their behavior is not far from the "empty head" practices in Taiwan referred to earlier. The difference is that the "empty head" game goes on largely within one's kinship circle, while the selling of IDs in the Bai village involves strangers. The different degree of marketization helps to explain the contrast. In a highly developed market economy such as Taiwan, kinship and friendship are the remaining relationships that can still bypass legality. At a relatively low stage of market development, where legality is irrelevant, IDs are no more than goods to be sold. Shanmei's experience also reveals that property rights are matters of social norms, not market legality. With the arrival of a market economy and the threat of Han developers, villagers re-established a concern over their river resources.

Mr Wen recalled that other traditional norms, such as not taking away honey bees if others earmarked them first, were spontaneously being practiced again. Just a few years ago, if one made a mark on the tree, it was almost an invitation to others to take the honey bees. Mr Wen regarded this conception of property rights as an example of "tribal norms and order."

About identity

The responses villagers have towards the market economy cannot be theoretically determined a priori. They never intentionally initiated contact with the market, but nor were they passive participants in the market when it did begin to affect their villages. As shown earlier, the market does not supplant collectivism. Both money-making and collectivism can sensitize or recreate minority identities. When community consciousness arises in a market economy, there are additional concerns for ethnic human capital or ethnic cultural tradition. This concern sometimes comes from outside the local villages, from Han as well as foreign influences. Outsiders typically expect a display of uniqueness or exoticism from the local people. For the sake of tourist appeal, local minorities often try to meet this expectation.[21] This is particularly true in Lijiang, Dali, and the Ali Mountains, but less so in Yongshuen, where tourism is centered around the Mengdong River, as opposed to minority (Tujia or Miao) cultures. Contact with Han tourists and businesspeople has prompted minority leaders to contemplate their ethnic identity. On the one hand, they feel a need to develop or preserve their unique culture. On the other, they want to protect future generations from exploitation by outsiders. They have become wary of the negative consequences of a market economy, but ironically this new awareness of their identity is a by-product of a market economy.

A Zou county assemblyman acknowledged that what his generation wanted most was "to offer children the kind of education that kids in the outside world usually receive." He accounted for the lack of interest in making money among the elderly as arising from the view that money is insignificant in the mountains because they lack extensive contact or competition with the outside world. The whole purpose of earning money is "to protect our children" and to prevent "our poverty in knowledge and wealth from affecting our children." In Shanmei, this takes a collective effort. The Association for Community Development is precisely a product of such thinking. Mr Fei, one of its leaders, explained the Association's rationale:

> "[The reason for the establishment of the Association] is to return the public asset [i.e. the Danuoyi Valley resources] to all the villagers to give villagers a chance to establish autonomous subjectivity and to make our organization a legal operation. The registration of the Association with the government gives us the legal right to make all the assets belong to Shanmei and to make all Shanmei villagers the true boss, the true master, of the Danuoyi Valley."

The unstated premise is that Han developers were the first to question and then threaten the Shanmei villagers' ownership of their mountains. Their concomitant notion of property is not a legally recognized right that is usually defined in an individualistic, as opposed to ethnic-collective, sense. To adapt, villagers learned to use the legal status of the Association to maintain ownership of the mountains. In fact, villagers cannot legally own mountains. The perceived ownership premised on the autonomous status the government grants to the local Zou people is not officially protected under Taiwanese law. In any case, once the sense of ownership emerges, it is followed pretty soon by the notion of permanent tribal ownership. This leads to the discussion of a long-term strategy of investment and management exclusively controlled by the Zou people. In light of this Shanmei subjectivity, the aforementioned compulsory work takes on new meaning. It is not merely a show of devotion to collectivism, but a statement of identity. The context of the compulsory work is to protect the community from Han thieves. The catching of Zou robbers was therefore embarrassing and annoying. Once this was resolved, identity politics inevitably provided the major motivation for the environmentally sensitive approach to tourism. When the first group of Han thieves were caught, villagers were unsure of how to proceed. The young wanted to hand them over to the police, but they went along with the insistence by older people that they be fined over U.S.$10,000 regardless of the Association's lack of the legal power to take such action. The money was placed in a collective account. Collectivism, ethnic identity, and money obviously all played a part in the extra-legal decision. Villagers were proud of themselves, and patrolling has become a new dimension of community consciousness:

> "In the beginning, we assigned one guard during the day and two at night. It took about two months to rotate through everyone's turn. It wasn't too long until nights [in the Danuoyi Valley] became socially active. I mean, there were two guards to patrol at night; some young guys had nothing to do anyway and they accompanied the guards. They drank in the valley. The valley has become a center for social activity. It turns out that when you patrol, I go along; so when I patrol on another night, you should come in return. Ultimately, many people are patrolling every night. Sometimes you see over thirty people in the valley in the process of constant patrolling. People are emotionally attached to one another and they're all attached to the gufish and the rivers."

Ms Wen, a director at Shanmei Elementary School, concluded that "from now on, all the activities should be compulsory," because this is the kind of devotion that can breed emotional attachment to the community and to the work accomplished.

The ultimate test of Zou identity came in 1997, when Typhoon Herbert struck. It destroyed over ten years of work and flushed away the gufish. Many villagers were desolate in the aftermath. A few struggled into the valley and reported signs of some surviving gufish. Here came the moment of collective rebirth:

> "People were desperate, about to give up all the work we had achieved over so many years, and unwilling to engage in any restoration. Just one simple sentence, 'There are still fish,' encouraged us to rebuild our confidence. All the village teams got villagers together. On the first day, we did a roll call. The young and even the elderly showed up. This was a rare mobilization of all villagers, more than one hundred. Around three o'clock in the afternoon, we finished the coordination process, and over the next two days we repaired damage that normally would have taken three to four weeks to fix. It was a touching scene watching people work hand in hand. Two weeks after the typhoon, we independently completed all the repairs."

In hindsight, the strengthened Zou ethnic identity was more a product of coincidence than an intentional strategy. Zou leaders themselves recognized this fact. Ms Wang, a member of the Shanmei medical service staff, explained that the only thing that villagers held onto through the years was a slogan:

> "We did not want to trample on this site. We just wanted to preserve and utilize what we've had here. There was no ambition to become the 'most' something in Taiwan or in the world. Unexpected media coverage both thrilled and distracted us. There was an inexpressible fear inside. Everything was just starting, after all. Before we had achieved anything, we were known to the outside world. How were we going to develop in the future? We only wanted to develop some of our own features, but these features must be in line with the times. The ultimate motivation is a slogan in the Shanmei community: unity, harmony and progress. This is the only direction."

Contacts with the outside world have had some negative impact on the villagers. An unidentified source in Tapang Village, Ali Mountain Township, confessed that the Zou people feel inferior when dealing with the Han in the outside world. After the paved road penetrated Ali Mountain, some young Zou became alcoholics because they could not adapt successfully to this new intrusion. Both the Lijiang and the Dali villagers have also had problems with assimilation. The problem may be more serious in the latter cases because, in the eyes of some of the local elite, both the Bai identity and the Naxi identity (unlike that of the Zou people, who have experienced a collective rebirth) have weakened in the ensuing market economy. Professor Li, a Bai scholar quoted earlier, asserted that even though the Bai have their own language and unique style of clothing, their ethnic identity has always been fragile.[22] For Mr He, for example, the Naxi are in an even worse predicament as fewer and fewer people speak the Naxi dialect – although, as noted earlier, their observation of a weakened ethnic identity can, paradoxically, indicate an enhanced awareness. Anyway, if an ethnic identity is perceived to be weakened, an individual member of that minority has difficulty explaining away his or her obvious disadvantage in the market. This becomes more serious if the market economy is inconsistent with an individual's human relational mode of

thinking. The second Mr He told of accommodation problems few would expect to come across in typical businesspeople:

> "The Naxi people are very conscious of their reputation for propriety. When they engage in business, rarely do you see a Naxi businessmen get rich. Once a Naxi makes money, he feels uneasy inside. There is still the old attitude that some other person must have lost money. He cannot maintain a balance in his heart. Even young people are like this."

More troublesome is the situation of the Bai women, as Mr Ding elaborated:

> "Feeling depressed in many aspects of life, she retains a lot of responsibilities in the process of modernization without achieving her ideal. How to enhance her quality of life? Not about her intelligence or family situation, but about her choices for the future. If she passes the college entrance examination, she can make a living without difficulty. If she fails, she returns to her village only to realize that she has already distanced herself from village life. She is not prepared to go to Shenzhen [i.e. a coastal city] like many Sichuan women do; she lacks the motivation [because her family can support her well]. Living in a feudal village is tough for her. If she goes to the cities, boys do not necessarily want her [as a village girl]. She herself does not look highly on village companions. Some [such girls] marry a peasant and become peasant women. There are people succeeding in the cities, but very few."

Without the support of a strong ethnic identity and a positive community image, members of both the Naxi and Bai minority groups may enter the market economy with some psychological disadvantages. This drawback has also affected Shanmei villagers, but today some Zou people are able to develop a positive self-image to offset the initial psychological imbalance to a certain degree, though other Zou villages in the Ali Mountain area are not as fortunate. However, the Tujia villages in Yongshuen appear not to be too disadvantaged. This has less to do with their positive collective self-image or sense of belonging than with their high degree of cultural assimilation, and also the low level of development of the nearby Han population. Being unable to find a suitable solution, Mr Ding comes up with a prescription for minorities in Taiwan as well as in China that requires no active solution:

> "The collision between tradition and modernity is serious. I saw the Saixia people from Taiwan last time [when they visited Yunnan]. As a minority, they represent a kind of dignity and present that dignity [in their style of dancing]. In response to the onset of modernization, their spirit is worth emulating. In our Bai nation, there is a parallel spirit. For example, some people try to promote the Bai language and will not give up until they die. The impact of these attempts is limited, though. Society has already developed and it is not practical to use the Bai language for communication. Even if you support

Plate 3 A tour guide negotiating the price with several Tujia sedan-carriers, Zhangjiajie, Hunan

them, they are not going to succeed, but it is wrong to criticize them. I remember when Teng Lichun's songs [a Taiwanese singer popular in China in the 1980s, now deceased] were popular; we could find Bai music on every street and there was a Bai language school. The school sent the students to villages to learn the Bai language, but doesn't this defeat the purpose [of establishing a Bai language school within Dali]? It is laudable to have the determination to preserve one's own ethnic culture, but it is harmful to refuse advanced culture."

Conclusion

In the Zou villages I visited, responses to modernization are mixed. People recognize the desire to make money as a widespread motive in other people's behavior, but it is believed that individual money-making does not always preclude a collective style of doing business. There are various ways of reminding villagers of collectivism and fostering it. One of the most widely used mechanisms is compulsory work, which is also prevalent in Han villages. As long as the market economy and individual money-making do not proceed at the expense of community development, village leaders can make better sense of marketization.

I do not have the evidence to say conclusively whether in reality collectivism is actually enhanced or, conversely, is set back by marketization, but it is apparent that interviewees have set up a discourse of denying the possibility that collectivism

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will die off in a market economy. The manner in which some interviewees apologize for the displacement of tradition or loss of selfhood has to be premised on a collectivist standard. More importantly, others see remedies in policies or events that serve to soothe the anxiety felt about losing a sense of community. In fact, in the case of Shanmei, it is precisely the market discourse that provoked the fear of being exploited by Han developers and then prompted the talk of unity, hence community consciousness. Whether or not Typhoon Herbert in 1997 has reinspired community consciousness is yet to be seen empirically, but the villagers in Shanmei have comfortably accepted their new collectivism.

From how people interpret the market economy and how they evaluate their own performance, we know that this economy, locally conceived, has yet to develop into a liberal, Western-style conception of the market. Among the Chinese and Taiwanese villagers there is not the same respect for individual property rights that is exhibited in capitalist societies. The possibility that their perception of the market economy will evolve into a liberal market economy cannot be measured by my interviews. In other words, it is not certain that the market discourse will replace the collectivist discourse because at present the latter appears to be influencing the meaning of the former, but not vice versa: westernization is not a confirmed end product of market development. One argument could be that in the three Chinese sites among my sample, a market economy would have a better chance of thriving because ethnic identification is weakening. I would caution against this by pointing to the practice of blaming a weakened ethnic identity on the market economy. In fact, to worry about the weakening of ethnic identity is actually to be more ethnic-conscious than not to worry about it. As long as the market economy is considered detrimental to ethnic identity, it is difficult to win full legitimacy for it.

Not everyone treats the development of a market economy as antagonistic to ethnic identity or collectivism; many people struggle to reconcile the two. Most interviewees would agree that a market economy represents something advanced and irrevocable. Their remarks show that a market economy improves productive efficiency and earning potential while simultaneously leading to changes in a society's value system. As I have discussed earlier, it is still too early to say with empirical confidence that values have changed because of modernization. Collectivism has taken on a diverse meaning that includes community development and Chinese nationalism along with its original, conventional meaning of human relations within the small group or village. This flexible definition specifically allows the minorities I visited to justify their individualistic pursuit of profit in the market as leading to an extension of the meaning of modernization, something they see as essential to their survival. And, of course, this individualistic proclivity is not to be identified with liberal, Western-style individualism.

My interviews in minority ethnic areas can provide an alternative interpretation to the apparent avoidance of collectivist discourses in Han villages. My guess is that if the state wishes, collectivist discourses can return overnight. This is the moment when the state needs to reinforce its distinction from the West. Once national identity and collectivism have returned to the official rhetoric for a long

enough period, there will be a need to downplay the importance of the market in villages as well. Those interested in promoting the market economy will have to devise a story of how collectivism and the market reinforce one another. If they do so, collectivist behavior patterns that have existed throughout will gain new meanings and possibly develop more variety. People in different localities will have their unique reconciliation and even sincerely believe in it. This type of resolution will alleviate worries that marketization will lead to westernization. In the end, neither the combined effects of westernization, the market economy, and modernization on the one hand nor collectivism and identity on the other can totally transform each other.

At the 1997 Fifteenth National Party Congress, ideologues cleverly but superficially linked socialism and the market economy to avoid discussing the true nature of their relationship. From the ethnic perspectives presented in this book, this all-encompassing but inadequate strategy of the government is its best attempt at promoting marketization. Eventually this strategy will require substance to legitimize socialism, especially if the differentiation from the West becomes alarmingly blurred, but if this were to happen and reinforce the construction of the Chinese/Western dichotomy, there would be a new fear of westernization arising from market development.

3 Interpreting elections in Taiwanese and Chinese minority areas

Although democracy and the holding of elections by secret ballot are not interchangeable concepts, many political observers consider elections to be a necessary condition for democracy.[1] This is especially true if marketization occurs simultaneously. Marketization and elections place a common emphasis on individual motivation behind political and economic behavior; this individualism is what drives democracy. While the individualistic character of elections as related to democratization may be reasonable, elections can also help to sustain social forces that are irrelevant, if not hostile, to democratization. If one were to overlook the various meanings of elections that do not lead to the rise of the sort of democratic culture familiar to political scientists, one would not appreciate the possibility that there might be different kinds of democracy, ones that do not treat seriously individual rights in politics or the market.

Scholarly observation of democratization today nonetheless focuses on elections because of their procedural fairness and the general acceptance of the result. Procedures are matters of institutional technicality, while acceptance is a matter of political culture. The former receive more attention both because technical matters can be improved fairly easily over time and because frequent application of fair electoral procedures is believed to be conducive to the breeding of democratic culture. Political scientists' interest in observing elections implies that elections can create, not just reflect, the knowledge as well as the will on the part of individual citizens or voters to participate in politics to protect their personal stakes.

The same line of reasoning may explain the rising interest among political scientists in the installation of electoral mechanisms in most Chinese villages. Outside observers cannot but wonder if the nascent practices of ballot-casting may bring about a more democratic China.[2] My argument that they are not likely to do so is based on my findings that peasants taking part in voting do it for reasons irrelevant to either individualism or liberalism, but rather to maintain some sort of identification with kinship and religion, as well as with their own political faction. People care more about expressing trust towards a leader who should know their interests best than about imposing their own conception of their interest on candidates. Despite the official media rhetoric that democracy exercises a political restraint on leaders, it is the quest for benevolent leadership that is clearly seen in these elections.[3] Chinese villagers have not learned to

mistrust their leaders in the way that Western citizens have. In the areas where I carried out my interviews, it is often the leaders' ability to improve the economic welfare of the village as a whole that attests to their benevolence.

In order to argue that this quest for benevolent leadership is destined to die out as the market economy develops, it is necessary to prove that the collective ownership system in the villages will dwindle and that collective identity will perish with it. If either of these happens, the holding of elections may simply represent a new form of collectivism rather than the installation of liberal democracy. Whether or not democracy is part of this new form becomes a matter of semantics. Past experiences in Taiwan seem to suggest that the existing human relational culture constrains the range of political changes brought about by the holding of elections.[4]

"Human relational culture" refers to an affective tendency as well as a cognitive necessity always to interpret one's own actions and role in accordance with one's relationship with a larger social network so that the little individual self is seen as embedded in the great self of society at various levels. The expression of one's own interest is legitimate only if it involves some selfless positioning which from time to time requires theatrical sacrifice of the interests that presumably prompt one's action in the first place. This relational culture survives through the rearing, educating, and socializing of a child. A growing person learns to relate his or her role in any given event to the situational context, which may be a family, work unit, community, state, nation, or race context. The acquiring of one's own material interest should be a by-product rather than a direct goal. Consequently, for people on the higher socio-political ladder, private interests and public interests are often difficult to distinguish. "Elections" as a judge of leaders' characters, not voters' interests, would be useful to the consolidation of collective spirit since the ruled have the right to determine whether or not leaders have confused the "public" with the "private."

Compared with typical villages in Han areas, minority villages should show this collective tendency more clearly. In theory, elections in these areas individualize minority members to the extent that they can leave behind their sense of duty to their ethnic groups and cultivate a stronger sense of loyalty to the Chinese state. Although democratization is not the same as assimilation, or sinicization, democratization that carries "civilizing" discourses cannot avoid triggering assimilation. If ethnic identity is important to minority people, their response to the introduction of electoral procedures in their villages should be even more mixed than in Han villages. In other words, human relational culture in minority areas should be richer. This is why one might expect that a meaning of elections that is more geared to collectivism than to individualism will show up more readily in minority areas.

Little research has been done in this area. Democratization of minority villages is not conceptually distinguishable from that of Han villages, probably because democratization is conceived of as universal progress, regardless of the country or ethnic origin of the areas under study. In this chapter, I will report on a number of interviews with local minority scholars and cadres at township and

village level. They come from the same minority areas as in the previous chapter and will be compared with each other. Both China and Taiwan possess human relational culture, although the latter is institutionally more democratic in politics and more liberal in economics than the former.

I do not pretend that my interviewees are typical of their ethnic group, but their views are useful because they teach us how elections can have different meanings. It is perfectly acceptable for readers of this book to interpret my quotations according to their own viewpoints. The purpose of the exercise is not to pin down a precise relationship between elections and democracy. Rather, I want to see how elections change the strategy of the interviewees in their identity politics.

A Zou village in Ali Mountain Township

The Zou people live in Ali Mountain Township in Chiayi County, Taiwan.[5] For the purpose of this chapter, I use interviews mainly with the Zou people in Shanmei Village of the Ali Mountain Township. Unlike in mainland China, where elections in ethnic areas are a politically sensitive issue usually not to be discussed with outside researchers, for the Zou people elections are a commonsense activity. Shanmei villagers are basically concerned with two types of elections: elections for the posts of village director and township director, and elections to the board of the Association of Community Development (see p. 36).

Aboriginal politics in Taiwan suddenly sprang to prominence in the 1990s.[6] The nine aboriginal peoples, once lumped together under the designation "mountain people," have a new label: "Original Residents." Original Residents, along with the Southern Fukanese, the Hakkanese, and Mainlanders, form what are known as the "four great ethnic groups" (FGEG) in Taiwan today. There was no such concept before 1990. Becoming the prevailing political jargon, the FGEG is actually the discursive tool of today's national leaders in creating a new civic culture in Taiwan.[7] Ideally, the new civic culture testifies to the emergence of new national identity, vis-à-vis the supposedly old feudal culture of Chinese origin. Based on the new civic culture, the government in Taiwan could acquire autonomous sovereign status and be politically independent from the People's Republic of China.[8] This explains the launching of "civilizing" projects in Taiwan, emancipating people from their old Chinese identity to accept a Taiwanese identity.[9] Aboriginal identity politics is useful here to the extent that it helps to create a sense of difference between Taiwan and China.

The differences between the nine aboriginal (some would prefer ten or more) groups in Taiwan are by any measure more varied and more significant than those between the three Han groups (Southern Fukanese, Hakkanese, and Mainlanders). A good reason to collapse aboriginal groups into one group may have to do with the limited size of the aboriginal population, but calling them "Original Residents" connotes a profound discursive strategy. Original Residents are those who arrived in Taiwan first, and they all belong to one ethnic group despite showing a diversity of cultural traits. Only when ethnicity is defined by the timing of arrival in Taiwan can one legitimately differentiate Southern Fukanese and Hakkanese

from Mainlanders, who arrived after 1949. By the standard of culture or blood, Southern Fukanese who came before Japanese colonial occupation, beginning in 1895, and those after 1949 share the same ethnicity, as do earlier-arriving Hakkanese and post-1949 Hakka. In addition, there are the mainland ethnic groups – Man, Mongolian, Muslim, Tibetan, Miao, and so on – which share ethnicity with the Han people simply because they all arrived after 1949. Moreover, intermarriage among the FGEGs is widespread. Seemingly unreasonable on all counts, FGEG politics is nonetheless rational to the extent that it tells how long ago one's group left China. This on its own is reason enough for the government to promote the FGEG discourse.

The Zou, one of the nine groups of Original Residents, were in an absolutely passive position when granted their new ethnic identity. The Zou (mistakenly termed Cao by the Han until 1998) were not the focus of the FGEG discourse, since the function of the Zou is to merge discursively with the other eight aboriginal groups and highlight the importance of temporal distance from China. The Zou's situation parallels that of the Native Americans facing white settlers over two centuries ago. On arriving in America and encountering native peoples, white settlers saw the strangers through European eyes. Some saw them as animals, while others believed they were human and had the potential to be converted.[10] At the Boston Tea Party, however, leaders of the War of Independence wore Indian dress to assume an indigenous position against the old European powers. The story of Wu Feng (see p. 51) stereotyped the Zou as barbarians, and yet today the Zou people represent a vigorous indigenous spirit which the Taiwan government uses to demean China's alien and aged character. The Zou's Original Resident status, not their Zou status, is further fixed by the creation of a cabinet-level commission specializing in Original Resident affairs. Through this manipulation of the temporal discourse, differences among the ten aboriginal peoples are reduced, while those between Southern Fukanese and Hakkanese on the one hand and Mainlanders on the other are strengthened, as are the differences between the Chinese in Taiwan and those on the mainland.

As an ethnic identity, the Zou do not have the choice of being other than Zou; they cannot see themselves as Original Residents because they are sensitive towards the timing of their first arrival in Taiwan. After repeated efforts and a campaign lasting several years, the Zou have finally succeeded in getting the government to change their name from Cao to Zou.[11] The Zou refusal to acknowledge the Han name is purely a symbol of resistance. This was not an issue before China policy sensitized ethnicity in the 1990s. The restoration of their name was one of the first few initiatives the Zou have taken in response to the government's "civilizing" projects. For the government, the FGEG discourse purports to create a new Taiwanese identity for all, though with some seen as purer than others, and with the Zou in the position of passive receivers. The responses from the Zou seem to indicate more sensitivity to their own identity than that of Taiwan. They are not alone in this. Some of the Saixia, for example, went to the Philippines, only to find one aboriginal group there speaking almost the same language as their own.[12] Identity formation across national borders

goes against the whole idea of the new Taiwanese identity. Because of the small size of all ten aboriginal groups, the government sees no threat at all in these roots-searching activities. On the contrary, and fortunately for the Zou as well as the Saixia, these activities are conducive to the sensitivity the government wants to heighten, which makes Mainlanders less pure Taiwanese, and the Chinese in China not Taiwanese at all.

A number of factors uncovered during the interviews appear important in determining how the villagers vote: the position of the elderly in the family or the kinship group, the position of Han dwellers living in the nearby plain, and the position of the ruling Kuomintang's local division. The sense of unity among villagers at the time of elections affects how well all these factors can interact. To achieve unity, villagers stress the role of mutual consultation. The presumption seems to be that no Shanmei villager should have anything more than the common position. The discussion is typically about unity or lack of unity, not about freedom of choice by individual villagers.

In the past decade, the village's community development was centered on tourism and environmentalism. Zou identity arose as an issue in the context of the wider upsurge of identity politics in Taiwan that began in the mid-1980s. Shanmei villagers have been able to settle on their Zou identity, but not without some struggles. In the end, fortunately, villagers successfully adopted Shanmei's chief environmental resource, the gufish (see Chapter 2), as Shanmei's symbol. The protection of gufish stocks against Han thieves and the growth of gufish tourism for Han tourists together perfectly serve the villagers' quest for a meaningful identity.[13]

Villagers established the Association of Community Development to manage tourism and environmental protection. Election of the board members has always been a big issue in the village. There was once the worry that election results might challenge the existing "social ethics," meaning balance among kinship groups. It turns out that every election reflects the balance well. The interviewees stress the contrast with the elections for village and township directors, where such a balance has never been attained. This contrast suggests not just that villagers are more independent voters but that, for the villagers, the Association is much more important than village or township offices. Mr Wen Ying-chie comments that he could not be more satisfied with "the balance":

> "The distribution of seats reflects our long-standing tribal ethics. This is not a negotiated result and is spontaneous. In the case of Shanmei, the An family and the Chuang family are the two largest. . . . You will find that Ans and Chuangs took the most seats in the last election. Other families have their share, too. The only family left out was the Tu family, yet the Tu family and the Yang family are related, and the Yang family won a seat. In brief, the association incorporates different positions, be they political, familial or religious. . . . In contrast, the composition of village cadres does not incorporate different positions. I think this organized balance was formed under the previous system of the Commission on Promoting Tourism. I realized this

> only at a later stage. In that previous system, every family had seats. This is why the subsequent association is able to shelve the village officials."

The position of village director cannot be shared. This explains why villagers generally do not feel as close to the directorship as they do to the Association. One former chief commissioner of tourist development, who later became general secretary of the Association and is now village director, never treats the Association as subordinate to his governmental office. On the contrary, he accepts his secondary role and uses the patriarchal metaphor that the man handles the outside world and the woman handles the domestic world to describe the relationship between the board and the village office:

> "When the election for the Association's board took place, Ying-feng won. Ying-feng has strong leadership qualities. He has been very active and has been able to raise a lot of funds. By comparison, the village director has no significant work to do. He did not know what to do in the beginning. He wanted to contribute but there was no place for him. His relationships with the villagers were not as close as Ying-feng's. . . . Later, he may have realized his vulnerability and said that Ying-feng took care of the outside world while he took care of the domestic world. . . . Whether or not there will be harmony between the board and the village depends on the attitude of these two."

From these remarks, it is clear that elections should produce leaders who are not there to promote specific interests. Leaders must demonstrate that they have no personal interests to serve. Wen Ying-chie, the interviewee, is a brother of Ying-feng and it is natural that he should stress the harmony and balance among families, especially when the largest family, the Chuang family, seems to be a little cynical about its underdeveloped leadership in the village office. Wen tells us that the Chuangs have the most seats in the Association, so that every development is ethical (*lunli*). One should note that the notion of being ethical is a statement about selflessness. Moreover, for his brother to lead the Association and the village legitimately, Wen needs to stress the fact that the Tu family was not left out in actuality. Without this ethical balance, Wen says, a possible consequence would be social disruption caused by the introduction of Western religion to aboriginal people in Shanmei; in the neighboring village, the different Christian churches split the villagers into confrontational groups.

In the age of elections, it is interesting to hear how Shanmei villagers emphasize unity and harmony. Indeed, before every election, Shanmei cadres work hard on "integrating" (*zhenghe*) different ideas. Cadres and villagers come together and everybody gets to express their opinion if they wish. As Yang Ching-hsi observes,

> "We aboriginal people are minorities in the first place and if we spread our votes thinly, the result would be very negative. We always work hard on integration, but we do not say you must vote so and so. We respect everyone's

> own choice. I mean, cadres will state their ideas and analyze the pros and cons for the villagers to know. Most of the time, after listening to our promotion, villagers can understand better and cooperate. This is true of elections for township director as well as for the head of Chiayi County."

Shanmei is unusual among Zou villages in that villagers are allowed time to question cadres or candidates after listening to their speeches. Mr Kao Cheng-sheng, the current village director, finds this kind of participation a unique feature of Shanmei unity.

Other Zou villages also cherish unity. Even though the younger generations have their own ideas and decide not to cooperate with the village elders, villagers still believe that the village as a whole should have a public consensus on its position. A consensus in the public eye is necessary emotionally because the image of unity is essential to the Zou sense of belonging, which is dying out in the age of development. One cadre in Tapang Village comments:

> "We belong to the Wang family, for example. There are many divisions in our kinship network and we always have a strong sense of belonging. We used to have the elderly family head come out to enlist votes. This is a relatively out-of-date mode of mobilization today because the younger generation has a better education and has stronger self-consciousness. We now depend on human relational networks, just like the relationship between you and me. For the sake of harmony, we continue to rely on mutual consultation; hopefully we can always come up with a candidate acceptable to everybody. . . . Remember, we are an underdeveloped village. If anyone remained selfish, our development would be even slower."

Tabang villagers feel that Shanmei villagers have a strong sense of unity, perhaps too strong, for even Shanmei cadres acknowledge that before every election for township director they hold a meeting of the elderly and send the decision to the local Kuomintang (KMT) office.

It is not just the Zou people who show this strong unity at election time, however. The Han people living in the plains areas are also unified among themselves during elections. For example, the Ali Third and Fengshan Villages, inhabited by Han, always vote together. One Shanmei cadre reveals his feeling of being threatened by this and asks, "How can the two villages, separated from each other by such a distance, show such good coordination?" Such feelings encourage the conspiracy theory that the Han want to split the aboriginal people. Some Zou cadres are even awestruck at the unity shown by the Han in the plains villages, implying that they too regard unity as a virtue. They express their admiration or envy:

> "In the past, whenever the government arranged social activities, the Han in the plains never showed up. It is different now. They are everywhere. For example, they are key in determining the results of township director

> elections. . . . The unity among them is impressive. Anything they promise you during election time they can get done. . . . My husband asked for their support in the last elections. They apologized: 'You're too late. We have promised another candidate,' they said. Another Zou candidate from a different village requested their support earlier. They said [to my husband], 'Why didn't you come earlier? We are old friends; if you had said it earlier, there would have been no problem.' Then they said, 'Well, let's see. How about this, we will give you six votes.' They meant it, for after the election there were exactly six votes for my husband. . . . I really admired them for this."

One Shanmei cadre is worried that the unity in his village perceived by the Tapang observers is breaking down. He thinks that the old social ethics are gone forever because of Japan's colonial rule and the subsequent KMT administration. He feels that the election for village director is no longer a choice made by the elderly. I find it difficult to substantiate his analysis. To compare the power of the elderly with that of the political regime is to compare apples with oranges. The elderly want to make sure that the holding of elections becomes an occasion to readdress the issue of unity, while the KMT uses it to gain legitimacy. In any case, the notion of unity continues to be a reference point when villagers judge events, as this anxious cadre comments:

> "Under the system of the elderly, the elderly from each Kuba [i.e. the rule of the elderly] will stand up to resolve the competition. However, the Kuba system broke down long ago during Japanese rule. The KMT was even more destructive. There is no core in the village today. The core gave in to the township office. In the past, it was the KMT who appointed the township director. Indeed, we have elections now, but most of the time they tell you to vote so and so and the villagers all vote so and so. The KMT's will dominates the township director's. As a result, the sense of community of our tribe is close to total destruction. Unless the party decides to open nomination to anyone who decides to join, there is no way the elderly can still coordinate."

Recent elections have become more competitive. People have realized that they can take advantage of them by articulating their needs, especially after the Democratic Progressive came to power in 2000. Facing competition, the KMT often makes the first move to inform the villagers of the party's choice, as one township cadre who prefers to remain anonymous comments:

> "In the past, when we urged people to become a candidate or to be our representative, nobody wanted to. . . . People's concepts have gradually changed. People now understand that we can take advantage of elections to promote and procure our community interests or needs. . . . This is different from passive waiting, which we did before. . . . That is why there have

> been many people jumping up to run in elections for township director in recent years. When we try to coordinate, I feel the party has more influence. They will pick one of the willing candidates from our tribe and tell us to support him."

The local KMT used to actively intervene in the election for the chair of the township assembly. In the past, the KMT preferred a Han chair as a balance to a Zou director. The ruling party is more open to elections today and the Han in the plains areas use a lot of tricks. One of the more popular tricks is to take all the assemblymen out for sightseeing a few days before elections so that the Zou people are unable to find and lobby them. If the election were totally opened to competition, the majority of Zou assemblymen would definitely elect a Zou, and this happened when the KMT opened up the election for the first time. In that year, the assembly under the Zou chairmanship moved quickly to change the name of the township from Wu Feng Township to Ali Mountain Township.

Wu Feng is a folk hero created by the Japanese colonial rulers. It is said that Wu, a Han widely respected by the Zou people, offered his life for human sacrifice as the Zou people pleaded for rain. Wu did this because, according to the story, he failed to persuade the Zou people to give up their rite of human sacrifice and he hoped to use his life to change the Zou's practice. It is said that the Zou people were so sorry after discovering that the man killed was their beloved Wu that they gave up their barbaric custom. There is no doubt that the story was a construction reflecting the superiority complex of the Japanese rulers.[14] The KMT took over the story after Japan left and wrote it into primary school textbooks. The Zou people have for generations felt degraded by this story and saw the change of the township's name as a triumph. However, the change irritated those Han dwellers in the plains who used to pray for good fortune in the local temple of Wu Feng. Partly as a result, the plains Han have felt it necessary to compete more effectively in the subsequent elections.

The Zou people are not used to the change of electoral style. The Han candidates have begun to buy votes. Some have developed good networking skills among Zou villagers. All have learned to use negative campaigning by disclosing secret exchanges, which is detrimental to social harmony. With Han leaders reassuming the power in the assembly, the township office and the assembly boycott each other. The KMT has lost control in recent years. One Zou assemblyman recalls what he once witnessed:

> "Here in front of us are all kinds of accusation from both sides. Staff and supporters on each side almost burst into fist-fighting. The conflict in the past was at most . . . well, they did not reach the level of fist-fighting before. During the meeting, they continued the boycotting, delaying, and fault-finding. The township office then imparts its plan to do such and such if the assembly dares to do this or that."

Neither the Zou nor the Han in the Ali Mountain Township are ready for electoral politics based on individual differences on issues. Differences are considered challenges to harmony by all the people involved. For political scientists, an election is a system premised on differences, but in Ali Mountain Township, people care more about harmonious human relations.[19] Competition and difference necessarily push the game into one of mutual negation.

Elections used to mean little to the Zou people. Once they became part of political life, the coordinating elderly people and a community development body such as the Association in Shanmei is needed to avoid vicious competition like that seen in township politics. The KMT intervention and the solidarity of the Han voters in the plains contribute to the Zou's sense of unity. On the whole, values that Zou cadres care about such as balance, ethics, unity, and community development are concerns relating to the tribe or the village rather than individual interests. It will take a few more decades to judge whether the sense of community will diminish under the influence of elections, as the anxious Zou cadre predicts. It is more likely that the Zou's thinking about elections will continue to spring from a collective perspective. From my interviews, it appears that the Zou's understanding of elections enhances their sense of belonging, albeit in a rather odd way, rather than detracting from it.

Democratic autonomy in some mainland ethnic areas

In mainland China, the CCP center has the policy of promoting democracy at village level. Ethnic cadres in villages respond by accepting the electoral procedures for leadership positions. But the installation of an electoral mechanism at village level does not necessarily promise real political or cultural change. Not only may local ethnic cadres elected through such village democracy not appreciate the meaning of democracy as political scientists understand it,[20] but also the rationale behind the village democratic system in China is not familiar to them. From the perspective of the Ministry of Civil Affairs, which has planned the new democratizing project, democracy is useful because it relieves the Communist Party of the duty of executing policies such as birth control, food extraction, and fee levy. Village cadres elected nominally or competitively do not have much room for independent action here. They are responsible to the township government on the one hand, and at the same time they have to cope with villagers' democratic participation during election time.

Since the introduction of the electoral system, village cadres have been left alone to deal with villagers. When encountering resistance in villages, they should not expect the same level of political support from the township government as they received formerly. If they cannot handle the resistance, the Party will look for someone else to take over in the next elections and will give responsibility to a new team. In the villages, the Party would like to remain behind the scenes now, although it is still involved in the daily operation of many villages. Except in sporadic cases, village cadres are in no position to challenge the township government. Nonetheless, the electoral system seems effective

in compelling most elected directors and their village councils to find ways to fulfill policy requirements that are acceptable to villagers. Despite their increasing responsibility, village directors generally appear willing to continue their work. Monetary incentives are partly responsible for this willingness. In Dashi Township in Beining County, Liaoning, for example, the Man directors in villages lose their salaries if the township investigation team decides that their performance has not lived up to the policy assignment given them at the beginning of the year.

The Party leaders at the top of the provincial or the central government are invariably Han or co-opted by Han, and their policies are naturally not ethnically based. If policies are ethnically based (e.g. exemption from birth control policies), they are made by Han officials. Ethnic cadres at the village level have to be responsible for whether or not the minority peoples take notice of Han-made policies. Electoral systems successfully camouflage the non-ethnic nature of government policies by holding ethnic cadres directly responsible for their implementation.

In the above discussion, a generally overlooked assumption about village democracy can be seen: that the villagers care more about fair implementation than about the substance of a policy. If the villagers cared about the substance, it is assumed, they would use the democratic process to articulate their own interests and compel whoever was interested in taking the position of village director to promote those interests. Indeed, villagers usually care more about the candidate's human qualities than the concrete policy, if one exists, that he or she advocates. Since the government primarily wants to resolve the problem of policy implementation and believes that finding the right director will do that, the government must have similarly assumed, first, that it knows villagers' interests better than the villagers do and, second, that the villagers agree with it. The widespread assumption that villagers only use elections for choosing the right person, not to promote their specific interests, is incompatible with the assumption of political science that in a democracy, each person knows and promotes his or her own interests.

The Chinese assumption about village elections therefore explains why it is required that ethnic villages should have ethnic directors. Although this requirement may not be universally followed, it is to a large extent. Obviously it is better to have ethnic directors implementing policies in ethnic villages. Once directors are from local minorities and elected by ethnic villagers, the Han-centered government does not face any ethnically based challenge to its policies.

There could be a risk, though, if one day government policies are found to be so bad that ethnic cadres in an autonomous county or prefecture decide to mobilize their villagers to resist them. The loyalty of these ethnic cadres to the state is therefore a politically sensitive question, and one on which the government needs assurance. Most of the time, ethnic villages are supervised by an ethnic township, which is under an ethnic county or prefecture. When a village director is popularly elected, this can put the village director and the township director against each other. Strong township leadership can often control the

situation, rendering village elections a mere formality. Since directors at the county level are also from the minority population, the government can avoid the risk of appearing to witness ethnic resistance to Han policy. In any case, at whichever level (village or township) the real power lies, ethnic cadres at that level are always concerned with the manner of implementing policy rather than its substance.

The process of nominating candidates for village director ensures both the participation of villagers and control by the township. According to Mr Peng, a Tujia general manager of Yongshuen Tobacco and previously a township director with much experience of elections at the village level,

> "We have elections. Villages are the most democratic places in China. We go through a prolonged and repeated process of consultation. The township government gathers all the information, evaluates it, and nominates a list for the villagers to vote on. We don't have the problem of vote-buying. To be a village director in Yongshuen is very tiring. Their intention is to serve people. The township director here must be from a minority group. The Han are actually a minority here and should receive special protection."

What is interesting about this comment is that nominees must go through a consultation process among villagers (which is largely a sham), but the final candidates are determined at the township level. In this particular case, villagers are economically underdeveloped and rely heavily on subsidy by the township. There is little to be gained by becoming a director, other than a small allowance provided by the township. The township thereby gets the power to interfere in village elections to the extent that consultation is little more than promotion of the official candidates. However, the township government strives to avoid weak directors who will not help very much in executing government policies.

The township wants to find directors capable of developing the village economy because the ability to boost the local economy is the most important way for a candidate to attract votes. Mr He Pinzheng, a Naxi scholar in Lijiang, Yunnan, comments that when villagers vote, "primarily they look at economic management, despite other obvious problems the candidates have. The good old man can no longer win votes. A good old man listens to the superior, having no skills of his own." According to Professor Gao at Yunnan University, even in villages where ethnically unique religion continues to thrive, during elections candidates must promise to develop the economy. In other words, the government needs someone to help develop the economy so that the person can have the respect of the villagers necessary for effective execution of government policy.

The thinking here is quite different from the modernization theory familiar to political scientists of the outside world, in which economic growth is seen as bringing the rise of plural, civil society. Citizens participate in the policy-making

process with the purpose of protecting their interests against government intervention.[17] The government's power should be limited by law and supervised by the elected legislature. The Chinese assumption is that villagers will have more trust in cadres who bring in growth and will willingly cooperate with them on state policies. Economic growth helps to integrate a community that is in the process of breaking down because of the weakness of collective business in the village.[18] In these Chinese ethnic villages, integration is achieved through the rise of a trustworthy and revered leader, whereas in individualist societies it comes through the consolidation of personal rights.

In reality, however, most ethnic villages have yet to achieve a level of economic growth strong enough to support adequate village leadership. The extant social organizations – for example, surname groups, religious sects, production teams – continue to dominate. Electoral mechanisms usually strengthen rather than weaken the existing organization. According to Professor Gao,

> "Anyone who relies on kinship and patriarchal structures can play with elections in places with closed geography, a sense of community unity and weak government control. When the village director is old and should be replaced, who does one vote for? Everybody knows who to vote for. The process of holding elections is required nevertheless. The process legitimates the succession. The successor still comes from the same family."

Government officials face a dilemma between stepping in and letting go. On the one hand, villagers apparently support the family, not the policy. This weakens the government's leverage in the village if the policy should some day contradict the ruling family's interests, as determined by the benevolent leadership assumed to reside in the family as a whole rather than in individual family members. On the other hand, as long as the village director keeps in mind the work of policy implementation, the township government, which is not influential in the village anyway, should not complain. In fact, village cadres, with the support of the social network, often abuse their power or even undermine government policy. In some areas, this problem may be more serious at the township than the village level.

Together with various old conventions, elections may reproduce local dictatorship. This happens even in relatively advanced ethnic areas such as Bai areas. I talked to two academics. One of them, Professor Li Donghong, comments:

> "An election is a matter of sheer formality. Most people don't care too much. People winning elections are those who do not work. Those elected are those whom villagers fear, not those who do the real work. They can be very oppressive. During elections, villagers only know those who come to mind most quickly. These are perhaps leaders of productive teams, the economically better-off villagers, those whom villagers fear most, and the more eloquent. The result often defeats the purpose of having elections in the first place."

Higher levels of government have a tendency to intervene whenever local dictatorships are detected, especially there seems to be a potential risk of aborting democratization. Professor Gao argues:

> "The township government goes down to investigate and intervene. . . . The key is how to handle the forces of family and kinship. If village councils and these forces combine, the consequence could be beyond imagination. If they do not combine, it is still possible for the government to influence the village councils. Nonetheless, the stability of the central political regime could run into problems. This is the situation where each village has a different minority and there is another new minority community every two to three kilometers. All issues in villages are resolved through private means."

Private means exist both inside and between ethnic villages. Under these circumstances, few people develop loyalty to an abstract state. In Yunnan, the primary function of elections is thus to produce village cadres who will willingly cooperate with the township government. In fact, government intervention may overturn the result of elections.

Sometimes, the directors who win the elections may be willing to cooperate, but are unable to mobilize the support of the villagers. Over time, experienced villagers adapt and vote only for those they know the township government can accept. He Pinzheng recalls what happened in his Naxi village:

> "In the past, the Party appointed village directors and village council members. All productive team divisions had their own team leaders, under the control of the party secretary. Election became a built-in mechanism for choosing directors towards the end of the 1980s. The masses voted first, but the Party would judge the result afterwards. If the Party was not satisfied with the result, it held another election. The Party was not concerned about the loyalty problem, but purely about whether it liked or disliked those elected. The masses like those who have economic ability. The Party accepts them as long as they are not bad people. Election by the masses is only the first step. Officials of the superior township finalize things. When casting votes, the masses sometimes take into account the possibility of getting approval from the higher level."

In Yongshuen, a county-level government of the Tujia and Miao Autonomous Prefecture in Western Hunan, the government's intervention is more sophisticated. Director Tian of Lingxi Township, a Tujia cadre, was appointed to Lingxi by the county government a year before elections were due. In Yongshuen, the township director is elected by the township people's congress, but the nomination is made by the masses or mass organizations. This is to ensure that the township government has some popular support. A year of work acquainted Mr Tian with his constituency, and this contributed to his acceptance by the local people

a year later. Yongshuen's Bureau of Civil Affairs is similarly sophisticated in managing village elections. According to Mr Wang, the bureau chief, who is of Tujia origin, on average a third of village directors failed to get re-elected: "Those who cannot even run public welfare or take care of the public interest cannot get re-elected." It appears that in these ethnic villages, the township government plays a critical role in arranging suitable candidates for village cadre positions. The right candidates are those who, once elected, can implement government policies effectively, mobilize support for reform, and provide feedback on social mood and feeling to the government. The function of elections, as the Party sees it, is ultimately to keep villagers in harmony among themselves, with the government and, most importantly, with the Party leadership, so as to smooth the policy implementation process.

It is worth noting that ethnic villages and Han villages are not necessarily different in terms of the function of elections envisioned by the Party. Ethnic villages are remote geographically, unique religiously, and relatively poor economically. The sensitivity of electoral politics in ethnic villages clearly does not result from these characteristics. It has to do with the fear that the impression of a Han/ethnic split may ruin the political unity of the whole country. As a result, intervention by the Party often carries with it some policy privileges or exemptions. In addition, demands regarding the pace of reform of electoral procedure are similarly loose in ethnic villages. This is especially true in Yunnan, less so in Hunan. The government as well as the Party is cautious enough to make sure that intervention is conducted by higher-level cadres who often belong to the same ethnic group, except in ethnically mixed Xishuangbanna, where a Han superior can appear as an arbitrator.

The meaning of elections for the ethnic villagers I met in Yunnan and Hunan is yet to be determined. What seems obvious is that elections serve functions other than protecting individual interests. There is also little evidence that elections are based in liberal individualism. Furthermore, the notion of democratic control is alien to ethnic villages, though not necessarily to Han villages. Yet many minority cadres – for example, Mr. Wang, Mr. Peng and Mr. Tian – stress that there is no difference between ethnic and Han villages in terms of village reform. No one in the Han areas ever mentioned the comparison to me.

This wanting to be no different from the Han seems relevant to understanding the relatively slow pace of political reform in ethnic villages. Not only do the ethnic leaders at township and county levels, in order to avoid embarrassment, ignore the fact that elections in many villages under their jurisdiction are a mere formality, but the ethnic cadres I also met in villages never seemed interested in resisting the Party or the government, whatever the latter's policies were. The government's problem with them is not resistance, but that they are not capable of implementing policies which often mean little to them, for example birth control. From this perspective, electoral mechanisms are themselves forms of intervention because they demand a lot of work from a generally uninterested population.

Conclusion

Democratization was implemented in Ali Mountain Township and in various Yunnan sites and Yongshuen at roughly the same time in the early 1980s.[19] Its most conspicuous feature is that ethnic villagers now elect their cadres. But the fact that ethnic villagers vote individually does not mean that they will think individually when they evaluate candidates. Political regimes at a higher level in all these areas typically require the elected administrators to be from the ethnic minority that they serve. Coordination and mutual consultation are necessary parts of electoral politics and put all villagers under pressure to adapt and to accept that they belong to a larger community. In Chinese ethnic areas, coordination takes place more in the nomination process, while in Shanmei Village it also occurs in the process of assigning villagers' votes to different candidates.

There are differences among the Zou in Ali Mountain Township, the Bai and Naxi in Yunnan, and the Tujia in Yongshuen. First, policy implementation is a less prominent concern in Ali Mountain Township than in its mainland counterparts. Second, ethnic villages in the Yunnan sites are not also inhabited by Han, as Zou and Tujia villages are. The Tujia feel no intrusion because the level of development of the Tujia and Han is roughly the same, while the Zou are faring much worse than the Han in the plains. This explains the expression of a stronger sense of unity in Zou villages. Finally, the KMT's control in Ali Mountain is weaker than that of the Communist Party in mainland China, and the KMT is not politically sensitive to the ethnic issue. For the more remote mountain villages in Yunnan, however, the Communist Party's reach can be even weaker than that of the KMT in Shanmei Village.

The similarities among these ethnic villages are significant. Electoral competition is not valued in any of them. Rather, integration and unity are the main concerns. Competing on the human relational front is more typical than intra-system campaigning. Anxiety over loss of social control is a built-in element of democracy, not a constraint on it. Family and kinship organizations are by far the most influential factors in election discourse. Even though people no longer blindly follow the family position, the repeated reference by the interviewees to "unity" or "consensus" implies a worldview where the meaning of life begins in the family and the tribe instead of the individual. Electoral politics have not yet changed fundamental Chinese thinking about the priority of the collective over the individual.

But the practice of electoral politics and the results of elections do not depend solely on this collectivistic worldview. The extent of the Party's intervention, the degree of mixing of ethnic and Han people, and the difference in the levels of development between the two groups, together with the continuing importance of mutual consultation among the elderly as well as between local cadres and the Party, all determine the results of elections. Because of the combination of these factors, no ethnic villages in my interview areas will be precisely similar, or comparable with the rise of individualism in cases popular in the political science literature.[20]

The sense of unity manifests itself in different forms depending on the local situation and the history of the ethnic identity. In other words, one should not expect electoral mechanisms alone to be able to transform ethnic villages. The responses from the ethnic villages are active and creative, if not always straightforward or conscious. Elections actually strengthen and further sensitize Zou identity as opposed to Han identity. Elections can legitimate existing ruling structures, for example in some Bai villages in Yunnan. Some Naxi villagers cleverly elect those the township can accept in exchange for support by the township of their preference for candidates able to offer economic leadership. With relatively little perceived need for ethnic solidarity, the Tujia high official maintains county-level stability by engineering the replacement of a good proportion of village directors. The burden of fixing Tujia identity shifts to the Han regime, which responds with its policy privileges and exemptions. None of these responses is related to, or less important than, any emergence of individualistic thinking.

Perhaps, in the more democratic of the Han villages, similar important responses are overlooked to the extent that we may have misinterpreted the meaning of democratization in Han villages as well.

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Part II

Ethnic sensitivity

Contingent identities

In Part II, to ameliorate the popular impression that there are always unique characteristics shared by members of the same ethnic group, I want particularly to highlight the internal variety within any group. The ways in which ethnic people identify themselves are a response to various situational factors. In some aspects, they become assimilated into the mainstream Han culture and maintain their ethnic identity only in a very artificial fashion. In other aspects, their social positions affect the level of their concerns regarding the promotion of ethnic consciousness. The discussion of modernity and modernization in Part I is useful in appreciating a common discourse of development in Part II. In Chapter 4, I find that the development strategy and the identity strategy often go hand in hand, but in Chapter 5, I describe how development has deprived the locals of their own discursive tool in interpreting ethnicity.

Chapter 4 reports on interviews with Tujia and Miao people representing the discursive formation of identity at four different levels, each with more than one subdiscourse not necessarily consistent with one another from an outsider's point of view. The chapter draws on postmodern as well as constructivist techniques of interpretation and advocates a more sophisticated alternative in reflexive Orientalism and multiple constructivisms. Basically, I find that the symbology of blood kinship, language policies, and market incentives has contributed to the formation of the identity strategy for people in different social positions. The varieties collected in this chapter testify to the epistemological problems of the principle of parsimony in the philosophy of social science.

In Chapter 5, I examine the discursive inattention given to ethnicity in Yongshuen County in the Tujia-Miao Autonomous District in Western Hunan. In contrast to most other work on Chinese ethnic politics, my discussion here concerns the *lack* of ethnicity. The aim of this chapter is to serve as a reminder that, in a case like that of Yongshuen, ethnic identification means more to a visitor than to the locals. Yongshuen's Tujia and Miao comprise a single community because of clan Confucianism, to which most villagers continue to subscribe. Modernization is yet to replace local conventions, and villagers who advance most quickly in the market willingly make sacrifices for their siblings

and children. The government and the Party assume the leadership role to meet the dependent mentality of the villagers. The lesson of my four visits to Yongshuen is that while everyone seems to agree that Yongshuen's dwellers are ethnically Tujia and Miao who have witnessed modernization, neither ethnicity nor modernization has a clear meaning to them.

4 Reflexive Orientalism in Tujia–Miao Jishou, Western Hunan

Approaches to Chinese ethnicity

Studies of Chinese ethnicity, many of which take postmodern perspectives and present historicist accounts of ethnic identities at various sites, have recently raised doubts about the essence of ethnicity. These accounts usefully disclose the constructed nature of ethnic identity. Hansen, for example, shows that the dominant Han government has assimilated the minorities into their assigned ethnic identities through state education.[1] Gladney further challenges the notion of Han identity from his research on Muslim identities.[2] In Harrell's introduction to the book he edited, in which authors collectively question the validity of the popular specification of ethnicity, he touches on the mundane implication of these constructions for the production as well as the distribution of resources.[3] Similar deconstruction appears in the writings in Postiglione's edited volume.[4] In response to hegemonic types of construction, however, I have pointed to room for creative adaptation by those identified in certain ethnic categories.[5] Even the locals themselves engage in sometimes careless, subversive, or constructivist politics of identity.

In his adjustment of mainstream social science's categorizing fixation in terms of structure, Wendt suggests an alternative in order to reconcile interpretive and structural analysis.[6] Wendt's version of structuration theory, which he called "constructivism," proposes that seemingly objective structures are actually subjective. Structures constrain people's behavior, but people's behavior collectively shapes structures. Structures necessarily change over time as agents come to understand and adapt to their understanding of the collective process among them. In other words, structures constrain behavior, but differently at different times as all sides adapt constantly, hence there is an ongoing process of "structuration," in which agents' cognition as well as behavior makes an essential contribution.[7] Applying this to the study of ethnicity, Wendt could similarly argue that residents in an ethnic site, all acting as agents of their collective identity, contribute to the construction of their collective identity, which then constrains their behavior. In this way, the contents of an identity are no longer rigid but are open to the interpretation of each agent, yet constraining it nonetheless. The constraining part of Wendt's structuration theory adds to the postmodern interpretation in a behavioral dimension.

Structuration theory does not answer some of the key questions with which different interpretive schools are concerned. For example, postcolonial writers would want to know why certain people are involved in one collective process in the first place or who put them together in that collective process.[8] Is it necessary to assume that each agent is in itself consistent at each point in time? What if agents are always hybrid inside?[9] Could there be remaining elements of the past that continue to hold back each agent in their practice of the perceived incoming structural requirements to the extent that an agent never really marches along the temporal dimension, even in the behavioral sense? Caught in between in this sense, structures that were supposed to come about would never do so.[10] All this points to a possibility that a constructivist could not see, namely that the process of structuration may not be moving forward all the time but moving dialectically among certain points mostly identifiable in the past. Lack of internal consistency makes it necessary that these different constructions appear alternatively by place, time, issue, etc.[11]

For students of Chinese ethnic studies who adopt postcolonial perspectives, there are reasons other than postmodernism or constructivism to believe that objective identities are difficult to specify. While structuralists would conceive ethnic identities as constantly reinterpreted categories, postmodernists would treat them as completely discursive. In comparison, postcolonial writers would emphasize that ethnic residents are each involved in different processes of structuration, rendering meaningless the single process of structuration at the group level, as Wendt would probably argue. As to what processes each is involved in, it would depend on who each considers themself to be interacting with and to which level of identity one believes oneself to be responding. In other words, structuration goes on at different levels, and for each person it has multiple dimensions. This trivialization of structure reveals the variety of structures that Wendt fails to see, and explains their behavioral relevance, a relevance for which postmodernists care little.

In this chapter, I study ethnic identities from this multiple constructivist point of view and at the levels selected by my interviewees. This means that my interpretation of specific structuration can apply only to the interviewees, although the mode of interpretation can be generally applied elsewhere. My purpose is to show that ethnic identities involve serious affective engagement that cannot be simply a product of discursive practice. However, no generalizable laws of science explain what kind of affective response a speech of identity would incur. Furthermore, I find that each interviewee or type of interviewee is under the influence of more than one identity discourse. This is a situation that determines which identity discourse will be recalled. This, again, is not compatible with structuration theory, which allows only the perceived single collective identity to determine behavior.

My research site is Jishou, the capital city of the Ethnic Tujia Miao Autonomous Prefecture of Western Hunan. The Tujia are the largest ethnic group and the Miao the second largest. Few Tujia still speak Tujia, but the Miao continue to speak Miao. I visited the Experimental Primary School in urban Jishou City; the ethnic Miao Middle School of Laer Mountain in Fenghuang County, which

is under Jishou's jurisdiction; Jishou Ethnic University; and two of the most popular tourist sites, the original residence of the famous writer Shen Congwen and a Miao tourist site in Dehang Village. In the following pages, I will discuss the meanings of identity for four different types of people: performers at the tourist sites, who represent personal and village-level thinking; schoolteachers, who represent township-level thinking; college intellectuals, who represent ethnic group-level thinking; and government officials, who represent cross-ethnic group-level thinking.

All interviews were arranged through the foreign affairs department of the municipal government. Two officials accompanied me throughout all the interviews. Local officials would meet us in schools, together with teachers. The interviews lasted over two hours and typically started with an introduction by the host, after which I raised questions. I never asked any theoretical questions and always asked questions based on the introduction. My purpose was to let the interviewees lead me. In Dehang, however, no interviews were allowed, but both the introduction and the performance were full of material for interpretation. My analysis in the following discussion comes from repeated reading of notes and afterthoughts which I did not have when I left Jishou.

Multiple representations in tourism

It is widely recognized that ethnic images in performances staged for tourists are designed to satisfy tourists' imagination about the local ethnic people. These images are not real, though they may affect how local people think of themselves and therefore contribute to the reconstruction of their self-identity.[12] Many of them relate to sexual activity.[13] Local ethnic performers cooperate in exchange for monetary reward. My own experience in Jishou suggests that these local responses have acquired their own momentum. Jishou citizens have learned from their past experiences what tourists want to see, and expect all visitors to behave in the same way. There are two implications. First, the contents of the tourist activities tend to follow the Dehang Miao's own folk stories, and so something is to be learned from those contents. Second, and more important perhaps, the performing style accords with what performers believe visitors want to see. Let me first describe my encounter in Dehang.

The Miao performers knew that I was a scholar and wanted to prepare a complete entertainment program for me, not realizing that I would have preferred to talk to them. The situation demanded that I could only cooperate with the performance, not ask any questions. On arriving, I was forced to drink rice wine before entering the village house. My protestation that my doctor had warned me not to drink wine went unheard and I drank. Still no entrance was allowed until I sang a love song. They appeared satisfied, so they asked me to sing a second one. I struggled to sing another, managing only a broken and incomplete performance. All the accompanying officials and hostesses were very respectful after this and allowed me to enter. I was still wondering when to begin my interview when I saw that the table was full of dishes. Once seated, I drank another

three glasses in accordance with the alleged local custom and sang between each glass. I was told this had to be done to show respect. Indeed, the officials had hinted at all this on our way to Dehang, but I had not paid serious attention to their warnings. I began to recall other stories they had told me on the way which should have alerted me to the hospitality I was to receive.

They told me that the Miao practice pre-marital cohabitation. Young people go to the three-day market, looking for potential mating partners. The young man spots a girl he likes, asks where she lives, and waits for her on her way home. He sings love songs to attract her and they enter a period of trial marriage. In fact, the first performance after dinner was a story of this kind. Subsequent programs were all related to love affairs between young men and women, apart from one story of a young wife bringing a newborn baby back to her home. The most dramatic part for me personally was that I was asked to go on stage a number of times, mostly to sing love songs that I really did not remember. At the same time, there were all kinds of little moves involving me in physical contact with female bodies and designed to tease me. Every time, the performers successfully caught me by surprise. Though not happy, I was able to make the hostesses believe that I enjoyed being teased, toppled, or trapped.[14]

The significance of performing for tourists is twofold. The first concerns style. The Miao performers, Han guides, and the accompanying officials, who are all ethnic Tujia, collude effectively to make the performances what they think I would like to see. There is no room for new visitors to raise any doubts about what they see, and visitors learn to enjoy what is prepared for them and imposed on them. Colluding partners surround visitors to create an atmosphere of complicity. For myself, I was unsure at the time who the performer was when I drank wine against my doctor's repeated warnings. I call this type of tourism a kind of reflexive "Orientalism," a term of Edward Said's. What happens is not just the dominant state and market forces "orientalizing" the Dehang Miao, or the Dehang Miao cashing in on the orientalized images to make a profit; rather, the orientalization becomes so deep that the Dehang Miao actively impose the orientalized self on the visitors. The result is that visitors perform to the satisfaction of the Dehang Miao, who can thereby avoid the puzzling question of identification. Reflexivity does not mean resistance. Reflexive Orientalism can be a kind of counter-Orientalism, an Orientalism that perceived orientalizers like myself cannot resist.

Said first applied the notion of Orientalism to studying the loss of discursive subjectivity in a former colony where intellectuals have internalized the former colonial master's worldview by alienating themselves.[15] Here, the former colony is discursively locked into a space that Said calls the Orient. The orientalized intellectuals have no conceptual tools that can express their feeling fully. In establishing self-respect, they have no alternative to meeting the standard of civilization set up for them by their former master. This would be an endless process of pursuit since their color, accent, location, and so on can never be as pure as this standard. Chinese ethnic minorities live in a kind of orientalized world of images, such as those of practitioners of sexual liberty or lovers of

alcohol, and the Dehang Miao are just one example. What interests me is how forceful the Dehang Miao are in executing these images. Perhaps this is because they might otherwise lose business opportunities or, more importantly, any way of making a statement about their identity. Reflexive Orientalism thus carries the anxiety of losing the orientalized self.

As to the contents of the performances, all are related to love, cohabitation, and birth. One may argue about the authenticity of the folk music and dances, but one must not overlook the common thread: all folk stories have to do with blood kinship. The implication is that the Miao are a people sharing the blood of the same ancestor. The teasing, joking, exotic dancing, and stories together reproduce the Miao through an imagined blood kinship. In my opinion, this partly explains the insistence that all newcomers accept the alleged customs that protect the belief in the blood network. If there is such a protecting motive, reflexive Orientalism cannot just be a passive response to orientalizing projects from outside. The Dehang Miao and outsiders collude to essentialize the distinction between the Miao and outsiders.

Reflexive Orientalism would confirm structuration theory in that it is a process that requires collusion. On the other hand, essentializing discourses through an ulterior premise of blood network is obviously beyond the conceptual framework of the ever-changing process of structuration. The performing style of reflexive Orientalism is more appropriate when interacting with outsiders, while the contents of entertainment programs reflect the Dehang Miao's own acceptance of their common ancestor. Compared with most other observers of ethnic tourism, who stress the satisfaction of tourists, reflexive Orientalism points to the need for such an identification mechanism in constructing a sense of security for the locals. In short, the Dehang Miao engage in two constructivisms, one with the perceived colluding outsiders in reflexive Orientalism, the other among themselves in an imagined blood kinship.

My visit to Shen Congwen's residence in Fenghuang County is worth mentioning. In addition to Shen, Fenghuang has produced a Republican premier, Xiong Xiling, and a famous contemporary artist, Huang Yongyu. All tour guides there are supposed to show which path or wooden bridge these three took when leaving Fenghuang. The whole rationale of tourism in this case is designed to give the impression that Fenghuang, a small mountain town, is full of talent. But the beginning of the tour left a quite different impression. A 19-year-old female tour guide rushed in and apologized that she had been given little notice and could not fully dress up for us. She meant that she was not wearing a whole kilometer of silver decoration on her chest to show how Miao women love silver. On our tour through the town, she kept stressing that Tujia and Miao have mixed their cultures and that intermarriage has become much more frequent since the early 1980s. She mentioned that they have both taken legendary characters, Luo Gong and Luo Niang, to be their ancestors. She spent an equal amount of time on Shen Congwen on the one hand and the interaction between local Tujia and Miao on the other. This is in line with the official propaganda that ethnic groups are in harmony with each other.

She also impressed the visitors with her college degree. She had graduated from Changsha Women's College in Changsha, the capital city of Hunan Province. She had entered college at 15 and was supposed to receive a high school diploma. The college gave her a college diploma because, according to her, she was able to pass the tour guide examination typically taken by college graduates. She is the youngest college graduate I have met anywhere in the world. Her introduction about Shen Congwen was practiced, but her knowledge about Xiong Xiling's involvement in Republican politics was inadequate. I see in her four different roles: propagandist for Fenghuang county, propagandist for ethnic policy, image carrier for the Miao, and professional tour guide. In response, I could be taken for a Shen Congwen worshiper, a follower of government ethnic policy, a tourist interested in the exotic Miao culture, and a consumer in the tourist market. She initiated all the discourse on inter-ethnic harmony and Miao images, and most of those related to Shen's story. I was more active in inquiring about her own professional background, and sometimes about Shen's and Xiong's past.

In our conversation, this woman's roles appear alternately. This is inconsistent with structuration theory, which expects change only, not cycling or alternation. In addition, tourists seemed to have no input to her repertoire, whereas structuration theorists would expect her to develop her roles by interacting with tourists. She decided what to say about inter-ethnic harmony regardless of who I was. There was no interaction between us on that account. Instead, she brought the government perspective into our discussion. My lukewarm response did not stop her from finishing her lines. But my inquiry into her background was not familiar to her, and on this subject there was certainly some interaction. Except for her complete working dress and hair done in the Miao style, I saw her as a modern working woman, not the exotic Miao she wanted to portray herself as.

Multiple representations in schools

Teachers think at the level of the township, for this is the community they work for. The two schools I visited were an experimental school in Jishou City and a middle school in Laer Mountain. Both are ethnic in the composition of the main student body. The experimental school is a boarding school sponsored by the government. More than 90 percent of the students are Tujia, the rest Miao. The experimental school is not an ethnic school officially, though it is housed in what was formerly an ethnic Tujia school. Since this change, the school has became an urban one, taking in only students within a fixed catchment area. Nonetheless, the neighborhood is Tujia. Without this ethnic composition, the government would not have supported re-forming it into an experimental boarding school. The school laid off all the teachers and hired new ones by means of a competitive examination. Because of its urban environment, it was able to attract the best teachers.

The curriculum at the experimental school closely follows the government's system. The slogan is "Face the world, face the future, and breed talent." Recent

Plate 4 Students at a Miao middle school in Laer Mountain, Fenghuang, Hunan, lining up for visitors

emphasis on "quality education" has influenced teaching methods. More attention is now given to music, athletics, English, painting and calligraphy, and so on. A few lessons have to do with Tujia-style art work. The principal is concerned to provide better and more modern facilities. He particularly wants to set up a central monitoring system so that he can understand what is going on in each classroom. He is also raising funds for a large library and a swimming pool. Throughout the interviews, there was little ethnic sentiment in people's remarks and in the environment of the school. The only mention of the ethnic status of students was when we discussed fund-raising. The school's ethnic composition enables it to apply for support from not just the prefecture's Education Department but also from its United Front and Ethnic Departments.

Although the experimental school no longer carries the word "ethnic" in its title, the school never fails to use its ethnic composition as a basis on which to ask for more money. To judge from the lack of ethnic relevance in almost all its teaching as well as its extra-curricular programs, the fund-raising strategy is particularly ironic. When I asked the principal how the school evaluates its own performance, the answer was that the most important criterion was the satisfaction of parents. Parents are very content that their children are learning how to take care of themselves independently in the boarding school and very happy with their academic achievement. Children improve academically there because they have to attend evening self-learning sessions at school. Students do not speak Tujia, even after school in the evening or in the dormitory. Teachers are

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not bothered by the loss of the Tujia language because, according to all of the interviewees, the function of education is to make students competitive in the mainstream society, where Tujia is not spoken.

In other words, the reason that the school and its various government sponsors are willing to treat the school as an ethnic one is that students are Tujia in terms of their blood but not in terms of their curriculum, custom, or language. Accordingly, ethnicity means two different things here. Inside the school, it is understood as nothing more than a fund-raising discourse. Since teachers do not talk about fund-raising to students, ethnicity would be irrelevant in discussions between teachers and students. Outside the school, ethnicity is implicitly understood as an essentialized blood relationship. Ethnicity in this case is therefore ostensibly a story about blood relationship but in reality a discourse used to obtain funding.

The ethnic Miao Laer middle school is very different. Laer Mountain is remote from urban areas, its residents predominantly Miao. Teachers told me that every student in the school is Miao. As in the experimental school, here the goal of education is to prepare students to enter the mainstream society. The expectation is that students who receive higher education after the middle school will eventually return to Laer Mountain and serve the home community. The middle school is also a boarding school, sponsored by the government because of the ethnic composition of its students. The Provincial Education Commission is able to allocate an additional 200,000 renminbi to the school. Since the economic level in the mountain is fairly backward, teachers of Han origin have a high turnover rate. Most Miao teachers are locals and are generally willing to stay.

Unlike the experimental school, Laer Middle School teachers are conscious of their Miao identity. To welcome me, a number of female teachers wore ethnic clothes that looked exactly like those worn by Miao women gathering in the market – not like those of the tour guide with the college degree. Before entering the gates of the school, there was indeed rice wine waiting, brewed by the school. But there was no forcing, and I could get by with only a gesture of lifting the bowl without drinking. Neither was there any demand to sing a song. Most teachers and all students speak Miao, and speak it in school. This is very different from the other ethnic schools I visited, where ethnic languages are strictly forbidden in the classrooms or even the campus.

In Laer Mountain, bilingual education applies until the third grade. The reason is to help the Miao-speaking children enter the Chinese language system. In reality, even in the middle school, teachers continue to use Miao to explain concepts in class. Since schools do not teach Miao, teachers obviously rely on the language used outside the school system to teach certain subjects which are supposed to be taught in Chinese. The use of Miao is not restricted to the classroom. Teachers and students typically speak Miao to one another. All the extra-curricular activities require the speaking of Miao. The middle school and the community sometimes co-sponsor social events, and here Miao is the only language used. In fact, the school is quite active in community life and it is Miao, not Chinese, that makes this possible. In addition to the formal education that

follows the national system, the school is also responsible for vocational education and social extension education.

When there are festivals, students join the community celebration activities. The school organizes teams to sing mountain love songs, beat flowery drums, and perform lion dances. The school does not need to train the students in advance. According to the teachers, every student knows how to do all this. A former principal of the middle school told me that "these activities instill a spirit into students' lives and a healthy mentality to continue their learning." In other words, although in theory middle-school education is more Chinese-oriented in concept and terminology, teachers are aware of the importance of Miao in teaching at this level. For Laer teachers, this means greater dependence on the ethnic language, which is clearly against central government policy. However, the Miao environment is so spontaneous in Laer that not to use Miao might hinder learning. Teachers feel comfortable speaking of their Miao identity and show no embarrassment in front of Jishou officials about their apparent violation of policy. No accompanying officials seem to feel any unease at all.

As in the experimental school, there can be two different realms in which the Laer teachers express their Miao identity. This identity is essentialized by their automatic and comfortable use of the Miao language in the classroom; they behave and speak as if Miao identity is beyond question. But this is merely a by-product of the chief purpose of the use of Miao, which is to prepare students to learn and understand the standard texts.

Multiple representations in college

Intellectuals in Jishou Ethnic University deliberately put themselves at the level of the whole ethnic group in their thinking about how to represent the group. There are two clear directions in their quest for identity. One is tackling changing aspects of ethnic identity, particularly the adaptation problems created by modernization. The other consists of efforts to preserve ethnic cultural traditions, which often means working first to extract these traditions from sporadic pieces of evidence. Both directions require hard work as well as imagination. From an outsider's point of view, to prepare for both change and continuity would appear contradictory. This is because the outsider has learned to choose between tradition and modernity and considers them to be at opposite ends of a spectrum. This does not seem to have bothered any of the five intellectuals I interviewed. The discussion was so sophisticated that it went on over four hours and continued during the meal we shared.

From the discussion, I realized that modernization and tradition are not necessarily contradictory goals for local ethnic intellectuals. One approach shared by my interviewees is what they call "ethnic ecology." This studies the balanced relationship between the ethnic people and their natural environment and so relates specifically to the life, death, and growth of the people. To understand how an ethnic group has survived and will survive in the future requires one to trace the origin of this balanced relationship before modernizing forces arrived.

Equally important is the spiritual support that the knowledge of this origin gives to the contemporary people struggling with a deteriorating natural environment. From my discussion with these five people, it is not difficult to see why there is no contradiction between change and continuity in this approach. For local intellectuals, resuming the ecological balance and tracing its origin are in harmony, just at the time when the Tujia and Miao are suffering from the Han's ecological imperialism extending over their living space.

Therefore Professor Ye Deshu of Jishou Ethnic University, an internationally known expert on the Tujia language, can recognize that Tujia will inevitably eventually disappear as a spoken language, and the urgency therefore of developing a written Tujia language system. The realistic evaluation of the future of the Tujia language attests to structuration theory. However, the determination to develop a written Tujia language demonstrates a powerful emotion towards the past that neither political scientists nor other theorists in the postmodern or structuration schools can explain. This emotional adherence reflects an interaction between the present and the imagined past, a kind of interaction that cannot be interpreted away. The drive to establish a meaningful past is now from within, regardless of whether it once began as a discursive practice.

As a result, what Professor Ye wants to rescue is something that he knows will perish. He uses the term "rush rescuing" (*qiang jiu*). None of the interviewees showed any animosity towards modernity as a concept. It is this recognition of invincible modernizing forces that prompts a sense of urgency in their rescue efforts. Since the Tujia language is the only means of access to cultural tradition, developing a written language is the only way to record and preserve that tradition. Nonetheless, one cannot work wholeheartedly for something that will eventually disappear if there is no practical use for it. Psychologically, it is necessary for them to stress also the practical function of written Tujia. "Research on the Tujia language," says Professor Ye,

> "is for recording use as well as for practical use. It must serve the development and growth of local ethnic people. There is no effective written form of Tujia's cultural tradition, so if the spoken language is gone, the culture will be gone. In addition, the structure of Tujia is different from that of Chinese. This is unfair to the Tujia students taking college entrance examinations. We create a written language and experiment with it with elementary school students. They learn Tujia at 6 and begin Chinese at 7. We have expanded the experiment to villages and succeeded in stopping illiteracy. The teachers have collected Tujia folk stories of a few hundred thousand characters this way. Once having acquired the language, young people use it to write love letters. This shows its real-life relevance. The same experiment is applicable to Miao schools. Twenty-five teachers fighting illiteracy have used the language to carry the tradition by writing down the spoken words and spreading them around. Twenty or so ethnic languages will disappear before the next century. Tujia is one of them. We have to 'rush rescue.'" The trend, though, is towards the disappearance [of these languages].

Ethnic ecology is a much broader study than language creation. It also tackles relations between ethnic groups and how these affect ethnic cultural development. The interviewees are particularly interested in the impacts of globalization on these relations. They are critical of the expansion of cultural hegemony at the expense of weak ethnic groups, but they celebrate the fact that cultural hegemony will never prevail. This is because once the balance between the living ethnic people and their natural environment is broken, adapting forces will arise to restore balance in a way no one is able to foresee. Professor Yang explains:

> "Every ethnic culture develops out of the ecology of its living environment. Once the group surpasses its living environment, the efficiency of its production drops. Maintaining efficiency requires the sacrifice of other groups' efficiency, hence cultural hegemony. Every group has its own inclination to use ecological resources and overlooks the use of other resources. When one is over-developed, one violates the ecology of others. We advocate a cultural balance where each group consumes resources in one particular way. Different groups move in different directions. If one group's consumption becomes unbalanced, all the others will suffer eventually, and so traditions necessarily change. This results in the destruction of the natural environment. But this is only so in the short run, for in the long run, every culture has the capacity to adapt and reconstruct itself to assume a new balance. Take Dongting Lake as an example. Han people created rice fields by damming part of the lake. The shallow-water areas expanded and destroyed the ecology of upstream areas. Would it help now to just give the field back to the lake? This is something we should study. The key is that Han people must not insist on extending their own culture into someone else's environment. We should recognize their culture and design reconstruction on that base. Ethnic groups never just accept outside influences blindly. People do not recognize their adaptive capacity at the time of accepting influences. Often it is cultural continuity that reforms outside influences and surprises us later on. Ethnic groups have been able to maintain, develop, and extend their ethnicity, showing a power beyond imagination. We are confident of us human beings."

This claim of confidence in human beings is especially worth noting because it parallels structuration theory. The difference lies in Yang's emphasis on the belief that there is a part of ethnic tradition not accessible to the forces of change. Another part of the tradition adapts to outside influences, but reform of cultural hegemony has to depend on maintaining the unchanged part, namely, a proclivity on the part of the group to use ecological resources that are in harmony with its original environment. One example of this given by Yang is a Miao village in the remote mountains. According to Yang, the government demanded that villagers import a new kind of corn and only use the new variety for tax in kind. The villagers kept the old variety nonetheless. They mixed the two varieties and actually continued the traditional cultivating conventions. The result is that their land is always in use, even in winter. However, the local government only counted

the new variety in its report and the amount was so low that the villagers should all have died of starvation. But the fact is that they are healthy. Only recently has the prefecture government discovered that their fields have virtually turned into a museum of corn varieties. The implication of Yang's story is that change and continuity must occur at the same time and that he and his colleagues as scholars must study how to smooth the necessary changes and maintain the tradition. They do this by checking whether ethnic ecology remains balanced.

At Jishou University, all disciplines strive to combine their research with local Tujia or Miao conditions. They are particularly proud of their research on roots, languages, totems, and conventions, for all this research attracts international attention. The attention is a counter-movement under globalization; many international scholars intend to discover as many local varieties as possible to prove that globalization remains a discourse, not a reality. This international exposure seems to have strengthened the belief in the local psychology that ethnicity is in some sense essential, granted that changes are present. Between change and continuity, material development and spiritual adherence, practical use and rush-rescuing, and development and custom, Jishou intellectuals move back and forth between the future and the past. One intellectual who studies ethnic tourism comments on a finding that reflects the worldview of his colleagues:

> "Tourism is a matter of profitable behavior. What tourists want to see is our culture, but it is difficult to make culture a tourist product. Tourists cannot see the whole of the culture. However, it is great that tourism brings resources potentially sufficient to help us leap over the industrial stage in our modernization. Outside forces nevertheless collide with our ethnic cultures and lead to changes. If we do not keep ethnic cultures intact, we will lose tourists, then resources will not come any more."

Multiple representations in official views

Government officials have to take a view of ethnicity that is conducive to the development of modern citizenship. Most officials I met in Jishou are Tujia. At lower levels, such as in township and villages, I got to meet those who are Miao. Their ethnic status does not seem to interfere with the overall view to which their roles subscribe. This may be because of the success of cadre education and training and their better social economic positions relative to those of other people in the community.[16] In the official view of citizenship, there can be no acknowledgment of any inequality among different ethnic groups. The government has an obligation to stress the harmony and the sameness in regard to the legal rights and the duties that all citizens carry.[17] The difference that the government is willing to protect is in the field of social customs, language, and religion.[18]

The obsession with the appearance of legal equality and cultural difference is what drives the state's minority policy. On the one hand, the state should provide privileged policies for the economically backward ethnic areas with the purpose

of achieving equality in development. Policy has an element of universality across all ethnic boundaries. On the other hand, the state should similarly maintain the difference among ethnic groups to make the category of ethnicity meaningful. Slight changes in these categories may bring serious political consequences in the long run. The state intervenes in this second regard in a peculiar way. Often government officials stress that the cultural and social differences do not hinder the development of citizenship. For example, I often hear in Islamic areas about how religious freedom granted to ethnic people does not preclude ethnic children's right to choose their own religion after they are 18. But the government's real investment in cultural heritage rarely goes beyond tourism or academic research into the origins of ethnic groups.

With the Tujia, the official view of ethnicity is quite passive. The attention given to Tujia ethnicity is embarrassingly lukewarm, for the Tujia themselves have very little to say about their uniqueness. Tujia officials accompanied me on most visits, but the prolonged discussion at Jishou University interested them little and no official stayed with me from the beginning; they preferred to chat and smoke outside. One education official I interviewed in Jishou talked about the privilege policy only in terms of the money the government allocates to Tujia schools. It almost appears that the government is more concerned with the category than the Tujia themselves are. This reflects a concept of ethnicity that embraces imagined blood kinship. The aforementioned experimental school in Jishou, for example, is treated as an ethnic school because its students are Tujia, even though the word "ethnic" was removed from the name of the school during restructuring in 1999. In fact, once the students finish the sixth grade, they will enter Jishou Ethnic Middle School.

In comparison, the Miao's language and social customs are much more conspicuous in Jishou. For the government, the seeming uniqueness does not mean much to policy-making. The government's Miao policy is similarly privilege oriented, including extra funding channels, access to better teachers, extra points for students taking various examinations, extra quotas for childbirth, establishment of ethnic schools or even setting up ethnic female classes, and granting autonomous jurisdiction. All this is not much different from ethnic policy elsewhere. To judge by the officials' explanation, the government cares more whether a person has ethnic parents than whether he or she is currently ethnic in whatever sense.

The government's attempt to equalize economic development, the literacy rate, and political participation among ethnic groups often requires a kind of intervention that breaks the ecological balance about which Jishou ethnic intellectuals care most. The observance and maintenance of ecological balance is not, however, the criterion the government uses in evaluating its own minority policy. In government policy one sees the kind of discourse that presents ethnicity as an imagined blood kinship. Nonetheless, structuration theory may contribute to our understanding of the government's forceful "civilizing" projects which elicit cooperative responses and silent resistance. For the government, policy universality and ethnic difference are two sides of the same coin. The government only takes responsibility for the universality aspect and leaves ethnic people to maintain

their cultural uniqueness. The government even has to watch them carefully lest the uniqueness undermine the unity of all ethnic people.

The government's preoccupation with the notion of blood kinship should be understood in light of the categorization's distracting effect on cultural uniqueness. The government does not deny the uniqueness of the ethnic peoples, and officials always claim to respect it. Nevertheless, minority policy has little to do with their uniqueness. On the contrary, the government strives to "civilize" backward ethnic groups so that all are socially and economically equal as individual citizens. "Civilizing" projects naturally obscure cultural differences. Thanks to the concept of ethnicity that is built around blood kinship, the government can now avoid the charge of eliminating ethnicity through its ethnic policy.

Conclusion

At the beginning of the chapter, I argue that ethnicity cannot be fully understood merely as a set of discursive practices, for this would be to fail to understand what drives behavior. Ethnicity is not an interactive structuration process, as constructivists claim, because contrary to the assumptions of constructivists, people are not all involved in the same interactive process. Indeed, different interviewees display various dimensions of identity that are not mutually interactive. In Jishou, ethnic identity is relevant to behavior, for it relates to the way people make a living, understand outsiders, interpret social roles, engage in social activities, distribute policy resources, and so on. More importantly, situations a person faces would engender different identity conceptions in him or her, which exist before a particular interactive process begins. Interaction may even take place between a contemporary and his or her imagined ancestors. This latter interaction supports continuity in ethnic identity and lifestyle, without which adaptation and change would have no psychological base.

Levels of thinking affect the identity discourses, and the selection of level is often an individual act, constrained by the role taken by the individual. The level does not determine which particular discourse prevails. Often, multiple discourses coexist. In this chapter, performers of tourist programs in Dehang are shown to have incorporated both blood essentialization and reflexive Orientalism. Teachers whose concerns are the development of children in the township engage in some sort of essentialization. For teachers at the Jishou Experimental School, essentialization is blood related, while for teachers at Laer Middle School it is more about language. On the other hand, ethnicity in teachers' relations with state and society outside the school mainly concerns fund-raising.

At the group level, I ran into a number of concerned scholars devoted to the rescue and maintenance of ethnic tradition. They are simultaneously struggling to find development alternatives that assist the group to adapt to a rapidly deteriorating natural environment. There is no sense of irony for them, no contradiction in that on the one hand they are trying to preserve tradition and on the other they are trying to adapt it. Outsiders, however, see that identity formation means dramatically different things in these two different modes of working. At the state

level, the government officials agree to blood essentialization in categorizing ethnicity, but they adopt a universalizing "civilizing" policy regardless of blood kinship. Essentializing discursive practices exist at all levels because, as mentioned earlier, they satisfy the emotional need for a sense of security and belonging that can no longer be interpreted away. Postmodern writers will not help us empathize with local psychology if they do not study actual behavior or emotion. As for structuration theory, it is just too simple. Multiple constructions exist on different levels. Whether or not these multiple constructions are logically consistent and how an ethnic local conceptualizes this potential inconsistency involves processes much more complicated than structuration theory prescribes. Finally, to repeat a previous point, people do not come empty-headed into an interactive process under one collective identity.

5 Clan Confucianism in Tujia–Miao Yongshuen, Western Hunan

Why Yongshuen?

When asking, or exploring indirectly, how one's ethnic background can be expressed in a basically Han environment in China, a visitor may encounter all kinds of answers. They can range from Lishui's She villagers emphasizing She mountain songs; Shenyang's Koreans extolling their Korean-language education; Litong's Muslims focusing on daily mosque activities; Beining's Man carrying the memory of a unique dynastic history; Ali Mountain's Zou concentrating on cohabitation with gufish; Xishuangbanna's Dai having as their central concern the schooling of boy-monks; Lijiang's Naxi being obsessed with matrilineal traces; and so on.[1] These answers can be simply social constructions to meet visitors' curiosity, or they can carry implicit inferences from sporadic remarks that do not consciously respond to any specific inquiries. My three visits to Yongshuen County in the Tujia–Miao Autonomous Prefecture in Western Hunan yielded a completely different impression, to the extent that cadres I interviewed did not once speak of ethnic traits, even indirectly, nor did they appear to care about them.

In their minority policy, the Beijing authorities have recently put more emphasis on economic development, in the belief that national unity will be more fully achieved if all minorities can share with the Han population the fruits of economic reform. Responses from minority areas are varied, though they seldom involve resistance. Accordingly, ethnic identity politics in China has developed in an intriguing way. From the government's point of view, ethnicity should be protected but depoliticized. Protection exclusively means policy privileges. The official attitude to ethnicity defined in cultural terms is ambivalent, since the notion of cultural difference has political implications, but ethnic groups may cherish cultural differences considered intrinsic to the maintenance of ethnic identification. The most convenient policy target for the government is thus an ethnic minority not too conscious of its identity, with an obscure cultural dimension to this identity.

Yongshuen seems to be such a place. Few people interested in ethnic politics would come to Yongshuen. This gives me at least one reason for studying it: if an ethnic area that is so unconcerned with its ethnic identity can still be considered ethnic, what can ethnicity really mean in China? My tentative conclusion

is that the local culture is parochial, as it is in most Han villages. Ethnicity in Yongshuen is a matter merely of clan circles — meaning not that local minorities explicitly portray their ethnicity in terms of extended family, but that their life concerns as revealed in interviews are basically about welfare and the interests of their kinship circles. This kind of conceptualization points to the widespread nature of Confucianism and the Han's general folk culture. As a corollary, Tujia–Miao ethnicity in Yongshuen is no more than the product of the government's ethnic policy. Aside from the policy privileges offered to ethnic minorities, Yongshuen's Tujia or Miao are hardly distinguishable from the Han in the same neighborhood.

According to Confucianism, the family should be the core of one's world. The state is no more than an enlarged family with its head serving as the father figure of the national family. In fact, the Chinese translation of "state" is "national family." The most important ethic is that of filial piety; deriving from it is how brothers should treat one another. The highest value is to keep harmonious relationships between parents and children as well as among brothers. The five elements in a Confucian hierarchy are heaven, earth, emperor (later "the state"), parents, and teacher. The most important roles are those of an emperor (towards his subjects), parents (towards their children), spouses, brothers, and friends (i.e. the five ethical principles). How is this familial harmony to be maintained in a market economy where competition is the key value? For Confucianism, the meaning of one's being comes from membership in a family, while in the market it comes from one's own success. One possible solution to the seeming contradiction between harmony and competition is, when one is prospering, to help one's children and brothers prosper. In this regard, there is little evidence to suggest that the Tujia or Miao are any different from the Han.

In this chapter, I will examine the lack of a conscious discourse of ethnicity in Yongshuen County in the Tujia–Miao Autonomous Prefecture in Western Hunan. Unlike most other work on Chinese ethnic politics, my discussion here is on the *lack* of ethnicity. I did not adopt this angle a priori. Rather, I began to see ethnicity in Yongshuen in terms of clan Confucianism only after my failure to see local villages in any meaningfully different way from my other Han or ethnic research sites. The aim of this chapter is to serve as a reminder that, in a case like that of Yongshuen, ethnicity means more to a visitor, who may be a government official, a journalist, or an anthropologist, than to the local people themselves. In brief, we state and market participants, theoretically individual citizens caring less about our ethnic background than our civic and property rights, turn out to be more sensitive and hopeful in wanting to spot an ethnicity other than Han than the minority ethnic people themselves.

The first section outlines interviews with two central government officials, which suggest that economics is the focus of minority policy. Subsequent reports are from interviews with cadres in mountain villages, village enterprises, and schools in Yongshuen, which I conducted in four trips between summer 1996 and January 2000. Most interviews took place in mountains at least 5 kilometers from any road.[2] There were always provincial, district, or county officials to

escort me, and their presence greatly helped my interviews.[3] This is because township and village secretaries, who never normally met officials of district level or higher, would cooperate excitedly, and mountain peasants would be willing to speak boldly with strangers only with their local leaders present. The most recent trip involved side trips to neighboring counties such as Fenghuang, and other places under the jurisdiction of Jishou, the capital city of the autonomous district.

Economics in command

No central government official is against the preservation of ethnic culture and tradition, but it is not seen as something of much importance. The official focus is exclusively on development and growth, and most officials adopt a linear view of modernist historiography. In this obsession with growth, it is likely that symbols of ethnic traditions appear as indicators of backwardness. Not only do officials of the central government want to see ethnic areas develop quickly, but local officials may also act aggressively to promote investment of all sorts. Often, investment overlooks longer-term preparation of a local environment for future investment, and such myopic investment may damage the local cultural environment. In their haste to seize the advantage of policy privileges provided by superior governments, however, local cadres have no time to waste on preserving ethnic culture.

Plate 5 Cadres chatting with a Miao private enterprise owner outside the factory, Yongshuen, Hunan

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A more sophisticated attitude holds that local ethnic conventions should be studied more carefully to allow cadres to use them as an instrument of economic development. Presumably local conventions that do not fit market conditions will eventually face the forces of change. Some refer to this as the use of ethnic culture to reform ethnic culture. In this view, ethnic cultural policy is essentially a part of ethnic economic policy. State officials at all levels evaluate lower tiers of government in light of their ability to stimulate growth, and they want to show foreign observers how advanced China's care is for the social welfare of ethnic minorities. The traditional, or the existing, differences between the various kinds of ethnicity draw less interest than their common end point of modernization.

In fact, officials in Beijing tend to conceive of ethnicity as an obstruction to development. Mr Zhang, a department-level official with the Central Ethnic Commission, on hearing mention of Western Hunan's minorities, commented that "clan forces in Hunan are very stubborn and this represents China's past feudal traditions, which have caused a lot of trouble." Mr Zhang specifically meant trouble for economic development:

> "Overall, the work concerning the ethnic minorities is the work of economic development. No one can say that the state has not been of great help. Why is it that there are minority areas that cannot be developed? The problem is that the study of their internal problems is lacking. An ethnic nation's lack of inner drive is its own problem, explaining underdevelopment."
>
> "Second, we must study how to develop on the basis of a minority's own culture, including its business culture. Muslims are good at commerce, for example. In contrast, the Elunchuen are entirely dependent on the government's support. Mongolians in Inner Mongolia are quite dependent on the state's support, too. The Elunchuen are hunting people, living in the woods. We Han are agricultural people. We moved the Elunchuen down from the mountains and provided them with all conditions conducive to development, money, and land, but they knew nothing about land cultivation. Last year, however, there was a great fire in the Xingan Mountains. The PLA [People's Liberation Army] soldiers were stuck but they were saved by the Elunchuen. They were good in the woods, but we made them leave. What we did was therefore to promote the weakness and avoid the strength. That's why we must study the material culture of ethnic minorities."
>
> "Third, each minority has its own social system. Seniors are virtually living in collectivism. Collectivism does not appreciate privacy, nor fit into the market system. In some areas, whenever one makes money, one invites everyone to drink up the money. Whenever one opens a store, people come in to eat but not to pay. The question is how to make them depart from the existing social system."
>
> "The fourth is about religion. It is not a joke that certain townships may need to consult with religious leaders in order to administer policy. The relationship between religious leaders and autonomous cadres is a headache in certain areas."

One common assumption throughout the discussion during my visit to the Central Ethnic Commission is that respect for ethnic traditions will eventually yield to the force of development. The government should ideally allow this to happen naturally and spontaneously, although naturalness is hard to define. Promoting market education and promoting ethnic religion are equally artificial, but the former is more natural in the state's marketization policy. As a result, those ethnic traits worth preserving would be those conducive to implementing the government's development policy. Mr Zhang explained:

> "Ethnicity is not something dropped from the sky, it is historically developed. If you think being equal is making everyone exactly the same, the result would be serious ethnic discrimination. This is what Stalin overlooked in the 1930s. He thought he had resolved ethnic problems and we all know what happened later. In the great tide of cultural exchanges, though, common traits will increase and ethnic traits will eventually disappear, especially those incompatible with development. Now, the Lama religion is no good to the Tibetans, but forcing them to change is going to cause problems. The Man instilled the Lama religion into those threatening nomadic minorities. Since lamas did not get married, and since the Man had the Han intermarry with Mongolians, the Mongolians were in danger of perishing. Mr Ulanfu advocated that Mongolians have the right to return to secular life. Then, they participated in our revolution, engaged in productive work, and had children. They were no longer enthusiastic about being lamas. We should not preserve ethnic traits only for the sake of wanting to preserve them. The Lama religion in Tibet will change by itself eventually."

I believe that most officials at the county level would agree with the analysis of their superiors in the central government. The most important policy in the area of Yongshuen is clearly economic growth. Anything that obstructs quick development is depicted as underdevelopment. In Yongshuen, however, ethnic traits are meager in daily life or in social convention. It is difficult to see that what cadres as well as villagers call backwardness could be a part of local Tujia and Miao conventions *per se*. Let us look at these local conventions and philosophy of life one by one.

Ethnic Confucianism in social networks

The citizen type that the modern state and market envision is quite different from that proposed by the norms of social networks embedded in Confucianism. Modernization theory expects that traditional villagers will ultimately evolve into rational, individual actors. In reality, on the contrary, the pressure of becoming modern individuals can be so great that maintaining extant social networks becomes a psychological necessity for villagers increasingly involved in state and market affairs. This necessity appears in various forms, some conscious, others unconscious. Indeed, since individuals are less and less in contact with kinship

groups in the process of modernization, social networks take the form of either sacrifice or abuse. Both sacrifice and abuse dramatize a traditional person's selflessness in a group scenario. For example, one should share profits or land with family members without asking for any reward. One can also use family members' names to evade tax or acquire rights, sometimes without having their prior consent.

In ethnic areas, pressure to form social networks can be greater than in Han villages because modernization simultaneously carries an implicit acceptance of assimilation into Han culture. Therefore the kin relationships outside the state and market are more significant to the meaning of life than formerly. Despite the fact that Yongshuen's local cadres always reiterated the official development line, it was apparent that policy was not what they really cared about, but that when they talked to strangers, they would be safe only if they reported their performance in respect of birth control, rice production, crime control, etc. Talk quickly returned to social roles after the first few minutes of official rhetoric. Discussion along policy lines is too material and rational to allow people to maintain their identity as someone belonging to a larger social relationship. Many of the details reported below will show how people have wanted to cut across inter-personal boundaries so that their being a part of a relationship can be signified.

A trivial observation

Separation of individuals from one another is anathema socially for Yongshuen villagers. As modernization begins, the most conspicuous indicator of this anxiety about individuation in modern systems is the use of chopsticks at meals. Elders appeared the least concerned with hygiene as they were the ones who got to stir dishes in the middle of the table with their chopsticks, an action which indicates there is no boundary between individual people. If you are not able to share dishes or glasses with the other, you feel anxious because the other party's appearance of being individualistic and therefore selfish denies you the opportunity to be a selfless friend. People need these social occasions more and more because their profit-driven behavior in the market gives the impression that they are becoming preoccupied with material benefits for themselves alone.

Similarly, in my few visits in Yongshuen I witnessed the interesting housekeeping styles of local hotel maids. From time to time they would suddenly enter the room without knocking because they wanted to make sure their guests' windows were closed when their air conditioner was on. The reason was to save electricity, and shows an emphasis on cost-saving, which is directly related to profit-earning, at the expense of any concern for privacy. All those acts that violate the boundary of an individual may in fact allay the anxiety local villagers have about people becoming self-centered through the market mentality.

Every time visitors arrived in a village, typically after hours of climbing and perspiring, one towel and one urn of water would be offered. All visitors shared the same towel. I always got to use the towel first. This guaranteed me no special privilege because I realized that that towel had been used repeatedly earlier in the day (or week perhaps). Would a higher level of development in which villagers

had more towels at home change the practice? Yes, for sure. But then the sharing of one towel on special occasions would become even more symbolic of communal living among the sharers. For example, plenty of glasses were available in the restaurants where we rested and dined, but the local people's love for wine disallowed one glass per guest. When villagers began to call one another brothers after a few drinks, they would deliberately mix their glasses or wine. To break personal boundaries like this is a ritual that has no fixed format, but everyone performing state and market functions feels they have to cross such boundaries in order to be accepted in the community.

Every household I visited, without exception, had the five elements of the Confucian hierarchy painted in big characters on the wall facing the gate: Heaven, Earth, State, Parents, Teachers. Four of the five ethical principles are included. The character for "state" is a substitute for that for "emperor" in the traditional house decoration. The parallel between emperor and state has complex meanings in the Tujia and Miao people's understanding of the meaning of the state. First, the replacement of "emperor" by "state" represents no change in philosophy of life because the state continues to sit between heaven and earth, and parents and teachers. The state as emperor implies that the state is not alongside the people but above the people. Moreover, the Confucian oneness linking five ethical relationships ensures that people who subscribe to the five ethical principles are not separate individuals. This must allay the anxiety raised by modern state theory, which regards citizens as separate, autonomous subjects, for the norms governing the emperor–subject relationship are the same as those now governing relations between state and citizen. It seems that this belief in the oneness of all citizens prepares Yongshuen villagers to accept their individual citizenship.

In contrast, in my visit to a Uygur township outside Changde, Hunan, what I saw was a rise of ethnic consciousness represented by the villagers collectively paying for genealogical research on their common ancestors and relatives. The result is an impressive collection of all those belonging to the family tree of Jian. The Jians recorded in the book amount to almost a hundred pages, with photographs of those who gave research money. What is interesting is that the villagers, without exception, lock this name book in a wooden box placed on a table facing the front gate. The book was completed in 1996, signaling the return of Uygur consciousness to the village. The book signaling ethnic origin in this village and the five big characters in the mountains of Yongshuen expose the lack of ethnic sentiment in the latter.

Family

Society in Yongshuen, as it is in many Han areas, is typically patriarchal in that it values boys over girls. This certainly has to do with the agricultural way of life, which prizes labor power. Seniors in all the families I visited have more than six siblings and at least three children, always including at least one male. In the Tujia village of Zhangguan in Diaojin Township, I went to the village director's aunt's

Plate 6 A Tujia family and their Miao grandmother welcoming cadres and visitors, Yongshuen, Hunan

family. Ms Shi, in her seventy-first year in 1997, had six children who had had, or planned to have, at least three children each for themselves. All were married under Ms Shi's arrangement. The house they lived in was built by Mr Sheng, her senior son, the third in line and the only male child. By 1997, Mr Sheng had three children. He had recently helped enlarge the house because the second youngest girl was coming back to give birth to her third child. She had to return to her mother's house because she would not be allowed a third birth in the village where she had registered her residence. In the presence of the accompanying county officials, Mr Sheng remarked, without the slightest hesitation:

> "This room I built for my little sister. . . . Her first two [children] are girls and her village did not allow her to exceed the birth quota. It's our convention that we must have a boy. So, she comes to us. She must give birth to a boy before she can stop having children. Our village does not care since she is not included in its quota. Why would it bother to offend us by stopping her? You know, we are barbarians. Who cares? She can give birth and then return. The worst is that she may pay a fine to her village. Yes, just a fine. Me? My third birth? They couldn't catch me. I had my third while working on a seasonal job in Canton."

Going home is the ultimate strategy for everyone in Zhangguan Village. They go home to avoid birth control or to await the next period of economic growth

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in the coastal cities. Zhangguan Village is a Tujia village, but Ms Shi is a Miao. Most villagers have had low-paying hourly jobs in the coastal cities. Ms Shi's first girl, her husband, and their two children (aged 23 and 21) have all been to Canton. The second, third, and sixth couples have been to either Canton or Fujian to seek work. They did not just go by themselves. There was a system that made sure that villagers from the same network stuck together in their workplace. This often led to competition, and then physical fighting, among groups of different kin networks in the cities where they work. This is not very different from any conflict among surname groups in Han areas.

It is common practice that once one succeeds in business, one helps one's children or siblings. The general manager of Hibiscus Ethnic Brocade, for example, has five sons and two daughters. The first two sons were laid off by national enterprises and sought help from their father. He helped the first daughter-in-law to set up a wholesalers' and the second son to install a photo print shop, providing each with 10,000 renminbi. The third son, with his support, invested in a hotel that "has a bathroom in every room," hence a luxury hotel by local standards. All his children paid a fine for breaking the birth quota allowed to them. Each additional grandchild incurs a fine of 3000 renminbi. It is the family that keeps the market (through investment) and the state (through fines) going.

The general manager of Lanhu Spice Factory and his wife are another model of Confucian ethics. The couple had registered themselves as an individual business household in 1982. They have been very attentive to market trends. In 1997 they were among those paying the highest tax in Yongshuen. Their support for their siblings abided by, but was obviously not motivated by, economic rationalism, as Madame General Manager tells:

> "I helped three of my brothers to install factories manufacturing sausage skins for export. Their investment came exclusively from a personal loan I acquired from the government. If they had lost money, we would have had to pay because all the loan arrangements were under our names. When we opened our own factory, we had to give our land to relatives still working in the fields. We did not charge them anything. Besides, we continue to pay the fee and the levy on our land. We do not let them pay for us."

The manager then told his side of the story, which reveals an intriguing relationship between the market and the family.

> "The brick factory my elder brother opened was initially our investment. We will open another factory producing sausage skins after the snowy season. We expect that more funds will be available after this winter. We will source in Hubei, where another three of my brothers have factories. We have three kids now. We broke the birth control quota and they wanted to tie me up. Having too many children is a burden indeed. [But] we have a psychology typical of individual business households – that is, the more the children the better."

It appears that Tujia and Miao villagers will consider the price to be paid when giving birth to an additional child, seeking jobs in Canton, supporting siblings and children, and so on. People calculate in the face of potential fines or investment opportunities. None of this calculation, however, is directly market driven. The market is more a tool than a philosophy of life. Although making money may dominate one's own business activities, helping relatives to make money is not the same thing as making money for oneself, especially when one has to bear the risk involved.

Family or kinship defines one's goals in career as well as in business, and this in turn constrains one's kinship roles. Mr Yang, party division secretary in the ethnic Miao village of Zejia, outlined his career as if he were reviewing his family history:

> "I had served as the head of a production team when only 24. I began to lead the team right after the Gang of Four were purged. My uncle used to serve as township director before 1949. This was considered a counter-revolutionary crime and I was deprived of the right to schooling. Later, I was unanimously elected villager director. In 1990, they wanted me to apply for Party membership. I was reluctant because of all the past grievances I had had with the Party. My aunt worked on me patiently. Her family had people who died in those past campaigns. They suffered a lot of political oppression. I agreed to apply after I had listened to her persuasion."

Economic and work motivation

If helping siblings and children is not directly motivated by market opportunities, is market behavior itself entirely a product of the profit motive? In the case of a Lanhu couple who call themselves "guerrillas" in the market, it is difficult to judge. They explored the market, looking for chances in their constant job-shifting. They have been chauffeurs, shop-owners, and wholesalers for agricultural products. One thing all these attempts have in common is that they "want to get out of the village" – meaning making a living by cultivating rice. There seems to be some personality factor driving them to return to the social village with honor. Anyway, judgment of their motives is not easy. In contrast, Mr Xiang, general manager of the brocade factory, specifically talked about his drive for social recognition and his personal characteristic of perseverance:

> "I have a spirit sustaining me [that allows me] to swallow bitterness. I was first sent to the village at the age of 22 and did not return until I was 55. One of my eight kids died in between. I had done almost every possible job while in the village. I am now running all over the country. I have information, and I want to observe and to explore. I used to run some commercial businesses. When I was running a draper's, I went to Shanghai, Hangzhou, and Guizhou, etc. Now that I have this brocade factory, I want to make money while enriching the ethnic culture of the Tujia people. I want to

> develop Tujia art and mobilize the Tujia villagers. I love to try new things. Central Television once had a program on me. It was later rebroadcast on the international channel. The Ministry of Culture has published 'Scientific Chinese,' which includes my story."

Both the factories mentioned in this interview have donated heavily to the needy. Their managers show little interest in politics and have turned down the opportunity to serve on the village committee. In recent years, the Lanhu couple have given the government 5000 renminbi to help supply village schools. Hibiscus Brocade has become the model business in the autonomous prefecture. Mr Xiang claimed that making money is never the most important thing for him:

> "I don't really make a lot of money. I run a good factory to be useful to the state and society. Compared with the state and the factory, I myself rank third in importance. I was very frugal and had killed not even one pig in my twenty-two years of village life. I did not even make more than 100 renminbi. To enable my little son to go to school, I had to borrow from everyone in the neighborhood. I want to pay society back today precisely because I know what a bitter life is about. The educational "Hope" project called on me for a donation of 1000 renminbi. I donated it. This time, I am again the biggest donor in the effort to relieve people who suffered in the flood. I saw a family unable to afford a coffin for a family member who had drowned. I led in giving 100 [renminbi] and the family was able to collect 1000 in the end. I take money lightly. I did not bring any money to the earth and will not take any away when I die. I have had plenty. I am already better off than the average person."

In villages, cadres show similar thinking, and it explains their work motivation better than mere personal interest can. The village director in Zejia, another Mr Yang, for example, sacrifices time for his own work in the fields in order to do some good things for the villagers. He was extremely frustrated on one occasion when he failed to coordinate villagers' support for the building of a new road. He looked for help from the Party secretary in the village, who recalled:

> "The director had no place to explode and he exploded on me and cried. I told him that the right to build a road comes from the government, but it was up to us to build it. I then helped him to coordinate the work. Anything concerning villagers' interests must go through the village assembly. Whenever it is in everybody's interest, such as to install cable channels, to dig wells, and to install electric wires, villagers do not fuss over how much time they have to contribute. In China, if it is good for us, anything goes. You have to let people know this is for them. Of course, we would exempt the poor and the disabled from the work. In the ethnic community, it is like a big family. When [we were] building the road, some would give a bowl of noodles, others rice, oil, vegetables, etc. No one would calculate. The road was built

> by over two hundred villagers. This is a matter of reputation and interest. As a human being, one must stress the reputation over the interest. Now we have built the road, and the road will be there generation after generation. People will all remember that we built the road. Together as a team, we really are some team, aren't we?"

The younger director acknowledged that he felt his job to be really demanding, but if he found that villagers trusted him to serve another term, he would do it again. The same attitude was heard in the ethnically Miao village of Xingnong. All the directors claimed that they had to have the trust of the villagers and the Party organization in order to continue. They themselves would never initiate the position search. They could have no personal motive. At least, it is not legitimate for them to have personal interests.

The "rule of man"

Another feature of clan Confucianism is the emphasis on the virtue of leadership. The Western philosophy of the rule of law, which considers governing a necessary evil and promotes the idea of limited government, is very unpopular in China. Contrary to the rule of law, Chinese politics typically adopts a system based on the "rule of man," which relies on the selfless rule of leaders to make decisions on public affairs. Yongshuen is no exception. In local political culture, it is the selfless quality of leadership that is believed to be most relevant to good governing.

The installation of village elections in Yongshuen County has yet to change the ruling structures in its villages. The political preparation for village leadership follows the existing practices, and the ruling families in villages continue to rule. In Zhangguan Village, for example, the village Party secretary had served in this position some time ago. Ms Shi said that this secretary "served for a while before he said he wanted to quit and after another while he is now serving again." In Xingnong Village, the Party secretary was the deputy secretary before taking over and had been the secretary of the Youth Corps further back. Similarly, the director of the Women's Division in the village was the Party secretary of the neighboring village. The same group of people simply shifted positions in accordance with the arrangements of the next level of the Party organization. Another Mr Xiang, Party secretary of Shaoha Township, explained that the superior would always lead the subordinate:

> "I used to serve as a vice-director in a neighboring township. Our job is arranged by the superior Party organization, which moves us to wherever it finds proper. In our village Party, Party members will elect a number of committee members. The superior organization will then decide who will serve in which position. The village Party committee members will decide how to divide the work among themselves. My assignment is to lead two villages' Party organization work. In the superior township Party committee,

there are seven committee members who are elected by village Party committee members and another two assigned by the superior. Currently, the township director is acting as the vice-secretary in a village. He is there to help the new incumbent. We will begin the next election for village director and I have a good candidate in mind."

The virtue of "little self"

Under the rule-of-man system, virtue is what wins legitimacy. It is wrong for anyone to come out speaking on behalf of themself. Village politics generally reflects the philosophy of "little self" in accordance with Confucianism. A little self never brags about his or her own achievements, lives strictly in line with social propriety, and sets higher standards for himself or herself in all respects. For example, in Xingnong Village, the successful development of a new rice seed has helped the villagers advance quickly in recent years. Yet the village director kept apologizing to visitors for not being able to enrich the villagers. In reality, he worked very hard to ensure the confidence of the seed company in the village's capacity to serve as an experimental site.

A number of accompanying county cadres mentioned their experiences with certain capable directors who were not moderate in attitude and lost the support of the villagers in the end. Villagers generally suspect those who are economically successful because, first of all, they are believed to be selfish. The people who are most successful economically actually do not want to serve in the village, where there is little opportunity to make a profit. Even when the Party is able to persuade some of them to take up a position there, they often leave soon after. There are also people who do not want the position lest the work should make them act offensively, which would hurt their business after they leave the job. Being able and having the reputation of being virtuous are the two criteria the Party looks for in potential leaders, and these are also the two goals of the Party as it prepares the youth for their future careers.

Collective consultation

The only legitimate way to get things done is to use comprehensive consultation and coordination before making a decision. The job of village director requires one to go backward and forward in the mountains and to reconcile different positions on the issues of the day. Party Secretary Yang of Zejia Village commented:

> "One must resolve problems through all possible channels. We must rely on the Party organization. We must rely on the masses, too. Other cadres may work even harder than us. Look at the village director or the leader of the Women's League, they are out there every day. I cannot do that because I have too much work to do at home. If they run into problems, they will come to see me. I will call an assembly of the whole village. We hold meeting after meeting and resolve the problems eventually."

In Xingnong Village, the final arrangement for the next leadership team is a result of comprehensive consultation. The authority of the Party has an important role, but consultation can still be time-consuming. Party Secretary Xiang of Shaoha Township explains that the township's policy is to combine village and Party leadership. Moreover, candidates for one position can always stand as candidates for another if they lose the first one:

> "Village council members and Party committee members are the same. The original director left and the current director is acting in this capacity until a new one is selected. We will have an election shortly. The village council has five positions and it is required that there be at least seven candidates. Each village team must nominate five candidates. We will have twenty to thirty in total. Then we will consult everybody. The first thing is to accept those overlapping nominations. We will go through a second and a third round of consultations among the villagers and reach the consensus on the final list of candidates. For director, for example, we will have three candidates. Last time, one of the losers later won the election for the head of the village militia. The third one unfortunately did not even get elected to be a member of the village council."

Elections for village director and Party secretary in Zejia Village are separate. Both nonetheless stress the importance of consultation, which is carried out among delegates to the village assembly and not among villagers. This does not guarantee that consultation will be easier, as Secretary Yang explained:

> "We elect village delegates from each village team and let delegates elect the village director. The Party needs to consult with all the delegates three to five times. In the beginning, twelve were nominated to be director. We had five positions for village council members. So we picked nine from the twelve as the candidates for the council. Five of them would be elected council members. The one who received the most votes also served as director. In total we had had more than thirty delegates, elected on the basis of past productive division teams. Later, we wanted to write a village compact, which had to be passed by the delegates. The contents of the compact may change in the future in order to abide by the government's new policy or to make it more practical. While trying to abide by the policy, the delegates must make sure that the contents are enforceable."

Dependency

While a superior official rarely hesitates in his or her leadership, subordinates commonly depend a lot on the superior, which fits with the rule-of-man system. As for consultation work, not only does this have to be organized by the superior, but its result is also guaranteed by the superior's willingness to intervene. On our way to Zhangguan Village, Mr Shi Yongshu, a Yongshuen County

official, pointed to a grove of trees on a mountain opposite and said that villagers had decided that it should not be cut down for the sake of economic development. Anyone who violates this rule and is caught must, as a punishment, kill sufficient pigs and goats to feed the whole village. The enforcement or relaxation of this sort of village compact would have to depend on the intervention of one's superior.

The superior often has a broader perspective than the villagers, who nonetheless have trust in the former's judgment. Party Secretary Yang of Zejia Village specifically maintained that the Party could not view an incident from an individual villager's point of view. This is especially true of issues involving public interests such as road-building and electricity facilities. However, whenever villagers look for help from the superior, it is always over some personal matter. Even in the market, where the ethic of competition should govern, the relationship between the government and business is one of dependence. Lanhu's General Manager comments:

> "A private enterprise like ours has depended heavily on the state's support in recent years. The policy of opening up to the outside world has given us certain exemptions and privileges. We are not a big enterprise, though. In the first year, they let me fix the tax at 80,000 renminbi in total. We would have to pay 180,000 if [we had to proceed] strictly by the schedule. The government granted me the profit, so to speak. My only problem is market uncertainty. The government can resolve all other problems I have. We had about 1 million cash in reserve when starting. The county government gave us that. To the government, we are still 270,000 in debt. I just hold it."

More so than between government and business, relationships between villagers and the Party or the government involve dependence. All the village directors I interviewed reported that the work that took most of their time was reconciliation. Husbands and wives, for example, would want village cadres to intervene in family affairs such as child-rearing, and the management of relationships between neighbors such as issues of land division or animals crossing boundaries. These trivial matters are so demanding that Zejia Director Yang and Party Secretary Yang decide to divide their work by areas, with the director in charge of low mountains and the secretary in charge of high mountains. Xingnong Village Director Du gave a relatively specific description:

> "There are a lot of quarrels in our village, and they are all trivial things such as land demarcation, irrigation schedule, etc. Reconciliation takes up a lot of time, way too much in fact. Like in the sixth productive team, it's so feudal sometimes. One time, an ox walked into a house and the host considered this great disrespect and misfortune. I worked on him and it took me the whole morning. Three days ago, there was a marriage break-up. You know, marriage in China is not just a children's game, but the couple

> wanted to separate. I investigated and realized that the husband was a little bit arrogant. I worked on him. I said a lot of good things about the wife. I worked through the parents of both sides to save the marriage."

In addition to businesses and families, schools seek help from the next higher level of government from time to time. The government supported the Zejia Village School's building of new classrooms, but dormitories for teachers to live in were in short supply. The principal was unable to get enough attention from the district government and decided to go to the provincial government. He waited outside a meeting room and was able to see both provincial governor and vice-governor and locate the money needed. This is like a typical Confucian movie story about virtuous high officials rescuing bitter peasants failed by the system.

Village leadership

The key to successful village leadership is threefold: to know when to intervene in the subordinate's affairs; to know when to look to the superior for help; and to know how to offer effective, comprehensive consultation. From Shaoha Township's perspective, Director Du of Xingnong is exhibiting good leadership. This is especially the case in his effort to secure the confidence of the seed company in the village's capacity to grow new seeds:

> "The seed company is independently run. The government may supervise it. To receive new seeds, one must go through the autonomous prefecture government because seed development involves scores of acres of fields. When growing the seeds, peasants must monitor developments carefully, and this relies on the assistance of the village leadership. Since seed-growing must take over an entire piece of land, all involved families had to agree. The work of persuasion faced by village leaders was enormous. Once the planting was done, village leaders and the seed company sent people to check on every family's work. If they did not meet the standard, we demanded that they plant all over again. It is impossible to succeed without strong leadership to mobilize the villagers. The key to strong leadership is to have a good village council and village Party division."

Xingnong experiences further suggest that good leadership also means maintaining good relationships with the seed company, for it is the company that gets to choose which villages to contract out for its co-production plan. From the local Miao cadres' perspective, good social relations are a result of conscious weaving:

> "All depends on social relations. Most importantly, don't let them have the chance to give us up. I am constantly in touch with the company and try to enhance my knowledge in order to impress the company. I keep promising

> that we will submit the seeds on time. We don't have lots of gifts for the company. We give our oranges. Every staff member in the local company's division will get one basket of oranges."

In Yongshuen, calculation over price and ballot box is part of daily life, but social networks are not determined by either the price or the ballot box. Tujia and Miao villagers do not ordinarily get the motivation to work solely from the market or from politics. In Zhangguan Village, for example, peasants rarely attend village meetings, even elections. In Zejia Village, the Party secretary introduced what he considered to be the ethnic Miao spirit. It was not rationality or autonomy, he said, but hospitality. Hospitality meant putting down your work for a couple of days whenever you had friends in town. Spouses should stop their quarreling when guests are in the house. In short, social ethics in Yongshuen value communal life more than rationality, relationship more than autonomy, and community interests more than self-interest.

Quality education

The county government has selected the Zejia Village School as the trial site for the promotion of "quality education," which has in recent years become the focus of the Ministry of Education in Beijing. The rationale of quality education is to shift the focus away from preparing students for the entrance examination to high school and towards the development of all-round human quality. The government expects all elementary school students to learn some art or music skill based on "personal aptitude." The principal of Zejia School specifically mentioned the performing art class and the musical wind instrument class, which have performances scheduled throughout the year. The school had just started another calligraphy class. Eventually the school wants to have an ethnic band of its own. The principal wants students to develop their own interest in these activities, at the same time bringing honor to the school and the village by performing for the public.

According to Principal Wang, however, the turning point in quality education is not about the development of performing skill. It is what he called "propriety education," which means everything from correct table manners to self-discipline to caring for others. This teaches children "how to respect the elderly and care for the young and how to treat all the schoolmates as siblings." Vice-principal Mr He added that students would have to memorize the dicta and practice these codes of ethnics on the public stage. All the propriety requirements, together with detailed rules of conduct, are set down in print. Mr Wang and his staff incorporated some indigenous conventions into these codes:

> "Propriety education provides students with a clear set of behavioral norms. They should say 'Good morning' to teachers in the morning, give up their seats to elderly people on the bus, know how to behave and say things in

> educated ways, such as 'I am sorry' and 'Thank you.' All the rules are in print now. The county government has unified the codes and printed a copy for everyone. If we find there are rules not suitable to our situation, we will cross them out. We add our special requirements. For example, students are not allowed to cross roads used by cars, or to bathe in rivers alone, or to play outside before taking their book bags home after school. They must go home first before swimming in rivers. Specifically, they must not cut electric cables along the mountain trails for fun. If you didn't have rivers in your region, you would not have the same codes of conduct."

If the rationale of "quality education" is to develop students' individual aptitude, the purpose of "propriety education" is to strengthen their self-discipline. The school obviously puts more emphasis on the latter. Teachers and parents cooperate on improving the self-discipline of the children. The principal reiterated the importance of disciplining students while they were still young. This is the foundation that one cannot afford to overlook:

> "You must teach them self-discipline in the first two years of the school. Kids go home to become babies of their parents, but the school makes it clear that they should do their own chores at home. Once they are at home, they ask their parents to fill their rice bowls. When teachers come across this problem, they will communicate with parents. We invite parents to school every semester and teachers visit students' homes. Let me give you an example of how important self-discipline is. In the villages, we have only wooden houses. Kids leave home in the morning and return with dirty shoes. This is a bad habit that we find difficult to change. If they learn to take their shoes off before entering, other people will follow suit and every family will have a cleaner home."

We had no discussion on education with ethnic characteristics. In fact, the principal, a Tujia himself, felt it would be making fun of himself to admit that he still spoke Tujia. Bilingual education is never an issue in Yongshuen. Neither the Tujia nor Miao in Yongshuen have special religious activities different from those of their Han neighbors. In Shaoha Township school, though, students learn ethnic Tujia traditional dancing. The district government prepares pamphlets on indigenous customs, but schools are lukewarm about teaching them.

The concept of time

In the modern age, time represents a forward dimension, not stoppable, and measured in seconds. The local time concept in regional China is noteworthy because it is at times seasonal, at other times linear. My own experience is that it is very hard to make an appointment at a set time. People make appointments by the half-day, such as "in the morning" or "in the afternoon." I once took a

minibus to a different village. My bus passed another bus and suddenly stopped in the middle of the road. The driver then backed up as the other bus also began to back up. The two drivers, still sitting in their respective seats, exchanged some documents through the windows, and then moved on. I asked the driver what had happened. He told me that they had said a few days ago that they would exchange these documents when running into one another on the road. They knew they would run into each other sometime or other.

There was another case in which our bus stopped at a station and the driver got out to call the name of someone in the crowd. The person showed up and got on the bus. This was someone the driver had said he would pick up. The deal was assured not by specifying the time of meeting but by knowing that they would find each other if they had said they would. The exact time was not important.

In Yongshuen, people meet regularly at traditional peddlers' markets. In some townships, villagers meet three times every ten days; others meet twice. If people do not get to meet one another on one occasion, they know they will next time, and will bring what they had said they would this time. For visitors, time is linear, and if it is gone, it is gone forever. For the locals, time is cyclical. In my own experience, appointments to see certain villagers always involved waiting to see them. On occasions when no appointment had been made, we got to see villagers anyway.

Mr Shi felt this was because local culture was backward:

> "Villagers' concept of time is really feeble. When I retired from the military and arrived here, I really had a hard time adapting. For example, in this village, we need to hurry to make our next appointment and want to eat simply and quickly, but they won't allow us to, and you have to eat and swallow and drink. Visitors like you are always busy. This is good in modern times, but the level of local culture is still underdeveloped. Remember the old saying, 'Let the township beat its own drum,' you should let it be. We are in their time dimension. This is our custom. You cannot expect formal appointments."

Linear time and cyclical time actually coexist in Yongshuen. Whenever you need to travel far, you have to look at the train and bus schedules carefully because there are not many trains or buses over the course of a week. For those living in the mountains around Yongshuen, time is useless. Life there, whether you are running away from a flood or collecting mature crops, is a matter of ceaseless day and night. While time seems important in these activities, villagers do not seem to realize its existence when facing difficulties resulting from nature. Party Secretary Yang said that he would note the time whenever he was out of town. The parallel of the two time concepts seems to repeat the other parallels between economic rationalism and kin networks, between quality education and self-disciplinary education, and between formal village organization and rule-of-man psychology.

Conclusion

I cannot provide direct evidence from their family, business, or management behavior that the Tujia and Miao in Yongshuen lack ethnic sentiment. There is, however, some indirect evidence. First, in my interview method I rarely posed my research question directly to them. Although interviewees generally knew that I was there to study ethnicity, I always started by asking how they reached their current position or situation, then developed subsequent questions from their answers to the first question, and so on.

In contrast, just as the schoolteachers I interviewed wore Miao clothes to welcome me to Fenghuang, so did teachers in Lishui, Zhejiang, when I visited an ethnic She school. In Changde, Hunan, as well as Litong, Ninxia, Muslim food is always a topic for discussion. In the latter case, the rise of mosque culture is a popular subject. In Beining, Shenyang, the interviewees typically mentioned Nuerhachi, the founder of the Manchu Dynasty, although their accent and clothes seemed no different from that of local Han people. In Xishuangbanna, no one failed to say something about Buddhism and the popularity of temple education among boys. In Lijiang, Yunnan, locals actively showed me Dongba writings. In Ali Mountain Township in Taiwan's Chiayi County, all Zou interviewees expressed a rising awareness of Han developers stealing their lands and natural resources. Only in Yongshuen did I fail to encounter anything ethnic in the story of the interviewees' own past. I was even unable to provoke any such response by asking them at the end of our conversation to say something about being a Tujia or a Miao.

There is also some indirect evidence from tourism. Arriving at a research site, I was taken to view different kinds of tourist sites every time. In Yongshuen, the tourist sites I was taken to have no ethnic significance at all, except at a small Tujia museum I encountered. The most "ethnic" place I visited in Yongshuen was the brocade factory, although it was not a tourist site, and there I was able to interview the general manager because he is a friend of the county-level official in the Department of Taiwanese Affairs.

Third, from the Confucian point of view, if my portrayal of Yongshuen's Tujia–Miao villages makes them appear little different from a typical mountain village in Han areas, it is because there is indeed little difference. If Yongshuen did not belong to a larger autonomous prefecture, few would notice that it is an ethnic area. Residents themselves do not talk about it. The economic conditions of local ethnic people and the neighboring Han are identical, further obscuring the material base for differentiating them.

Yongshuen's Tujia and Miao form one community because of the clan Confucianism to which most continue to subscribe. The philosophical link between villagers and the state extends all the way to heaven and earth, as paintings in every household reveal. In this sense, the ethnic community is no more than another small unit in a continually extending family or social network, and renders the notion of ethnicity redundant in Yongshuen. Modernization has yet to replace local conventions, and villagers who advance most quickly in the business world

willingly make sacrifices for their siblings and children. The government and the Party assume the leadership role to suit the dependent mentality of the locals.

The lesson of my four visits to Yongshuen is that while everyone seems to agree that Yongshuen's inhabitants are, ethnically, Tujia and Miao who have witnessed modernization, neither ethnicity nor modernization has a clear meaning to the members of either of these groups. This is a useful point to remember when we are enjoying professedly clear-cut research findings in those areas with ostensibly more clear-cut ethnicity or modernity.

Part III

Ethnic traits

After assimilation

Assimilation of the minority populations to the mainstream Han society has been a goal of the central government as well as of many local leaders. Areas that officials consider highly assimilated are of great importance because assimilation suggests the possibility of artificially transforming one community into the liberal stage of history constructed for it from some extra-community source. I studied two ethnic peoples who are proud of the extent of their assimilation: the She and the Man. However, their celebration of successful assimilation carries different meanings for different ethnic consciousnesses. In other words, even assimilation into the same Han culture can mean different things, as the identity strategy proves to have no predetermined path. In Part III, I show that the Man are comfortable with assimilation and sometimes become more patriotic than Han citizens, but that the She people struggle with a sense of being ethnic. The latter's celebration of assimilation never fails to remind people of their ethnic identity.

Chapter 6 uses the case of Man in a northeastern town to illustrate how difficult it is to decide on an adaptive path. The Man identity, which was once associated with the dynastic leadership, disappeared after China became a sovereign republic in 1912. Man people hid their identities to avoid humiliation. Their sheer number could not be overlooked, however, and the newly established Republican government decided to recognize Man identity. In reality, many Man did not identify themselves as Man until the 1950s, when the government started to take ethnic identification seriously. It turned out that Man who once thought they were Han had already adopted a Chinese consciousness and could look at their own Man identity only from a Han Chinese perspective. This unique Man experience fails both the social science approach, which tries to lock identities into some objective standards such as language, custom, religion, or blood, and the postcolonial approach, which focuses on the contradiction between subaltern and mainstream identities.

Chapter 7 reports on my field research on the She people in the Lishui area, whose uniqueness lies in the fact that their language is historically essential to their self-image. While they are losing traditional religious styles that carry the language, mountain songs are emerging to stabilize it. Until now restricted to private occasions, the language is being given new public expression by these songs. Ethnic athletic activities similarly have become a fad because these activities

do not need spoken language in their performance and yet they publicize She characteristics. One may question how genuine or unique mountain songs and athletic activities really are, but the lesson is that the She people want to maintain a distinction from the Han and have found creative ways to do this. Without the "civilizing" projects and forces of transformation set in place to modernize this people, they would not be so interested in exploring new dimensions of their ethnic identity.

6 Chinese patriotism in Manchurian Beining, Liaoning

Ethnic consciousness

As I mention in Chapter 1, the more an ethnic minority identifies itself with the Chinese nation, the less it probably needs to distinguish the Han from itself. I have also suggested that the Chinese consciousness of a minority is stronger if its members feel less need to make a distinction from the Han. There are two situations where Chinese consciousness may be strong in an ethnic neighborhood. The first is that this particular minority has weak ethnic consciousness. A case in point is perhaps the Tujia and Miao minorities in the Western Hunan Autonomous Prefecture, described in Chapter 5. The present chapter will deal with the second situation, in which a minority have such a clear ethnic identity that there is no way that their Chinese consciousness will threaten it. Identity politics for a minority is always hard to conceptualize.[1] Strong ethnic identity does not always lead to a sense of security. It often reflects a sense of crisis or lack of security. The Koreans, the Tibetans, the Taiwanese aboriginals, and so on are cases that come to mind. In contrast, the Man and the Muslim identities are very secure. These differ from each other, however. In the case of the Muslims, the Chinese identity and the Muslim identity run parallel. The Muslim people identify with the Chinese nation and with Islam at different times, in different places, and on different issues.

In the case of the Man people, there are no separate arenas for ethnic and Chinese identities. It appears that being Chinese is an intrinsic part of the Man identity. This is why the Man identity is unusual. Not only does the Chinese consciousness not threaten the sense of being Man, but they are mutually reinforcing – at least for the Man, if not for the Han. The Man consciousness does not exist outside the state or the market, or through specific identity discourses prevailing exclusively among the Man people. But it does undeniably exist.

The Chinese consciousness, like it or not, necessarily penetrates ethnic arenas, particularly the forces of the state and the market. All kinds of assimilation projects are being undertaken in ethnic neighborhoods.[2] There are typically two streams of theoretical predispositions in observing the adaptations made by ethnic people. One is from the Han perspective, discerning the ethnic characteristics such as language, custom, blood, religion, lifestyle, etc.[3] This is a social science paradigm. The second perspective is from within the ethnic identity. This perspective

cares more about how each ethnic group adapts to the forces of state and the market through preserving, changing and creating dimensions of identity in their mindset to the extent that the indefinable traffic between Chinese consciousness and ethnic consciousness goes on forever. The confrontation between two streams of consciousness is shunned, instead of being reconciled.[4] This is a postcolonial type of approach.

The Man case represents a third approach: that the Han consciousness and the Chinese consciousness intrinsic to Man identity render meaningless the search for characteristics. On the other hand, the Man people are not caught between two identities, as postcolonial writers assume that they have been.

I did my research for this chapter in Dashi Township, Beining County, which is about 150 kilometers west of Shenyang, Liaoning. I met with and interviewed township cadres, township schoolteachers, and village cadres from Dayi, Daer, Dasan, and Huashan villages. What I find and report in the following is that Man identity is based not on any scientific characteristics or responses to Han assimilation, but on a historicized origin which no one, not even the Han, questions. This origin has no secular relevance and no one cares to deny it. It is in this way that Man identity becomes permanent and secured.

Ethnic characteristics of Man villages

Beining County is where Nuerhachi, the founder of the Manchu Dynasty, began his career. It was once the site of study for Yelyu Chucai, a well-known premier of the Liao Dynasty, over 1500 years ago, which was one important origin of the Man. Local officials guided me to Yiwulyu Mountain to see where Yelyu studied and where Emperor Qianlong of the Manchu Dynasty left a good deal of his calligraphy.

The four villages I visited are mainly composed of Man residents, with a small number of Xibo, Mongolian, Korean, and Muslim villagers. The Xibo are believed to be a division of the Man. Among the four villages, Huashan is the poorest; the other three have thrived in the past decade from growing fruit, especially grapes. The Xibo language is spoken only among the Xibo people in distant Xinjiang Province, not in Beining. In contrast, the Mongolian language is popular in the Mongolian Autonomous County 5 kilometers north of Dashi. No one still speaks Man, though the local dialect has adopted a small number of Man colloquialisms (e.g. *cat* meaning hiding and *dunk* meaning fast). My hosts quoted some other interesting usages to show the Man legacy in their colloquial speech today. In Jingzhou County, a few hundred kilometers away, the Jingzhou Ethnic Normal School teaches students a limited amount of Man. Many teachers at Dashi came from this normal school, but few ever teach Man in class.

At Dashi Township School, there are few signs of any Man consciousness. The only language spoken is Mandarin, and there is nothing characteristically Man in the curriculum. Beining County, however, prepares "indigenous texts" as an extra-curricular activity for all schools under its jurisdiction; these cover the history and customs of all minorities in the county. A vestigial ethnic conscious-

ness is found in talk about ethnic clothing, which is no longer worn. One teacher said he possessed authentic Man clothes that had belonged to his grandmother. Another pointed to the style of hair binding that could distinguish the Xibo from the Man. Ethnic Man uniforms are worn by the ethnic band Principal Wang introduced to the school, and is worn by both Man and the Korean students. The Korean-style waist drum is mostly played by Man students. Deputy Township Director Tan confirmed that part-time teachers led all the music classes and thus could not possibly develop any ethnic characteristics for the students or the school. Only during funerals can one possibly see rituals with Man characteristics. Township Party Secretary Liu told me that children knew their ethnic status typically from their parents and that the school rarely touched on the issue.

The policy of the Ministry of Education is that schools emphasize "quality" (*suzhi*). "Quality" education is supposedly where programs related to ethnicity can most naturally come in. For Dashi School, this means the opening of different music classes – Principal Wang went to a Han school in Shenyang to learn how to manage music classes. However, what teachers think of rarely has anything to do with Man ethnicity.

There are further signs of assimilation in these four villages. The policy privilege granted to the Man specifically refers to the privilege of having two children per family, but many families are satisfied with one child. This suggests that villagers themselves do not seriously regard the higher birth quota as a privilege or feel threatened by a possible fall in the size of their ethnic group in the future. This lack of sensitivity toward birth policy privilege seems to indicate the inability to think from an angle within the Man identity. In addition, Man students are granted extra credits on entrance examinations at all levels. What was interesting in the Man villages I visited, compared with other, more assimilated ethnic villages (e.g. She villages in Lishui, Zhejiang, or Tujia villages in Yongshuen, Hunan), is that, unprompted, the Man interviewees never mentioned these policy privileges. By contrast, the She or the Tujia constantly talk about the privileges they are granted by the state.

In fact, there are few policy privileges in the economic arena in Dashi. Such privileges, however, were always important to the inhabitants of my other research sites. For example, Huashan Village cadres are very unhappy about their economic situation. They have tried to switch to different fruit crops, but have lost their source of income as the old trees have been removed and the new ones are yet to grow. When they were asked if they were exempt from fees, the answer was no. It did not occur to Huashan villagers that their ethnic status could be a bargaining chip with the township government. In other words, they do not see themselves as different from the Han majority in the area of economic development.

The very few who study the county records may know how their ancestors arrived. Most show no interest in their Man status in ordinary life. In reality, many families are mixed, containing members identifying themselves as Man or Han. In Dashi, it is very common for one's cousins to belong to a different ethnic group. This is because their parents are from different groups and they are able to choose their own ethnic status. Even brothers and sisters may choose a different

ethnic status. Mr Liu, a college-educated chauffeur interested in finding his own ethnic origin, nonetheless discourages his child from learning Man. According to him, there is not even sufficient time for the child to learn Mandarin. If his child is going to learn another language, it must be some foreign language, and he believes that this is "the trend of the world."

Mr Guan, a Xibo teacher, argues that learning good Mandarin is much more important than learning Man. What distinguishes a Man from a Han is not one's difference in anything, but the simple sense of knowing and caring about one's ethnic status:

> "On the whole, we are all assimilated into the Han, like me, a Xibo. . . . A Man is nonetheless a Man, though there is no difference between our customs and those of the Han. A Man's identity relies on legends. There are lots of legends about our Man ancestors. To be a person of a higher cultural level, I would look at the tradition and the culture of the ethnic group. We used to have a mountain with a Man name. Now the name is lost. We have ethnic totems, which are symbols of ethnicity. Each ethnic division may keep some of its own characteristics which only people of that culture consider. For example, every festival witnesses a 'high-foot' performance. It is the sense of tradition that supports the performance. The school does not intervene or participate in this sort of activity."

The legends he mentions include one about how a raven and a dog once saved Nuerhachi. The custom has it that, in the past, the Man did not eat either ravens or dogs. This sort of legend historicizes the Man identity, however out of touch with the reality of today.

Real-life concerns without Man characteristics

There seem to be no Man characteristics in most of the concerns and chores discussed in the interviews. In Dashi School, teachers care most about how to modernize teaching facilities, among which acquiring a computer room is of the utmost concern. The more realistic concern is the hope that the students perform well when the investigation team come and call students to answer questions orally. What school leaders feel most proud of is the completion of the building of classrooms for both this school and the neighboring middle school.

Financial difficulties have troubled the school in the past few years. Each teacher has kept a piece of contract land as a supplement to his or her feeble salary. Just two years ago, the township government was unable to pay their salaries on time. The fact that the villagers were able to support the building of classrooms despite the school's financial constraints has greatly encouraged the schoolteachers.

Whenever the school needs new buildings, teachers confer with each village council in the township. First of all, the township government must support the construction. What is left for village councils to decide then is how much money each can come up with, and therefore what sort of construction villagers can

afford. The school itself is yet to develop its own source of income. The reliance on the villagers for every new building has caused second thoughts for many villagers.

On the whole, Man parents are willing to send their children to school. Feelings about school have been changing recently, but Principal Wang regards parents as still not eagerly involved. It takes about 100,000 renminbi to support a child through college. The government is not responsible for finding jobs for them today, as it was in the past. Since the financial burden of running the school falls on village councils, some prefer children to return home and help with the fruit crops as early as possible.

Township Party Secretary Li wants to change this way of thinking, saying, "If they quit because of poverty, they will be sucked deeper into poverty." His policy is that every two cadres in the township government should enable at least one child to go to school. They should first "appeal to parents' emotion" to get the child back to school. Then they will "resort to the financial incentive" by covering the tuition out of their own pocket. Finally, they will "call on the law" to force the child to return.

Village councils care most about economic development. All villages in Dashi first divided the collective land into individual households in 1982. Growth has been impressive since then. The Party has a triple policy of regionalization, industrialization, and marketization. Secretary Guo of Dayi Village recalls that the most important thing at the time of land division was to convince villagers that the policy would not change for the next thirty years. To be convincing, the cadres themselves had to be the first to switch to fruit-planting and making money. The whole process of getting the most stubborn peasants to change could be completed only under the leadership of the Party.

According to the cadres I interviewed, peasants continue to have a strong feeling of reliance on the Party leadership, especially since the land was divided, causing the sense of collective responsibility to fall. Dayi Village Director Du finds that what occupies most of his time is reconciling disputes among individual households over minor matters. According to Daer Village Secretary Wang, the reliance on the Party continues even after the granting of village autonomy and the holding of village elections.

The consensus is that the seriousness of elections does not change the culture of the village. Wang comments, "The fortune of a village depends on the ability of its Party Secretary." As long as there is a good secretary, "Who would not support him?" The most important element of becoming a good secretary is "to be fair," according to Senior Associate Party Secretary Cui of Dasan Village. The secretary must have his own initiatives, Cui says, in order to win villagers' respect. For example, the secretary must on his own initiative look for villagers who have trouble paying taxes or fees. He should quickly arrange for the village council to provide a tax loan.

Man villages do not have a sense of autonomy. In the eyes of Cui, the relationship between his village and the township government is one of subordinate and superior. The township government has a very strict set of criteria by which to

evaluate the performance of the village cadres. For each failing in village management, from a list of 4500 possible faults, the government deducts 1 renminbi from the village secretary's annual salary of 4500 renminbi.

Huashan Village disputes this system of supervision. Huashan has a debt of 300,000 renminbi and the villagers are generally poor. Their debt had to do with a previous policy that pushed the village to run businesses. Huashan's business failed but its good record in the past unfortunately raised all the criteria set for it to a high level. The dispute also concerns salary deductions by the township government. Huashan Village Director Liu complains that all their salaries are included in the tax which villagers submitted to the government in the beginning of the year. If the government wants to cut their salary for their poor performance, it should at least give the money back to the villagers, Liu says. The government does not do this. On the contrary, it rewards other village councils that perform well. This, for Director Liu, is in effect robbing the poor to support the rich.

Huashan Secretary Liu reported that the per capita income of the village is below 1000 renminbi, but the village fabricated an account book to show an income of 2000 in the hope that fewer points would be deducted. This is why "the superiors do not know the peasants' real-life situation." As a result, the government, the villagers, and their families "all complain about us." Not only is there no policy privilege, but Secretary Liu also mentions policy restriction. This concerns the Haushan villagers' wish to harvest natural timber. According to Secretary Liu, the more one cuts the natural trees owned by the village, the more trees grow, but the government treats the natural forest as though it had been planted by human beings and disallows the cutting of its trees. It appears to Huashan cadres that the policy restrictions on the Man are stricter than on the Han.

The Huashan cadres nonetheless stay on the job. As the senior accountant in the village comments, they would leave the job "only if, first, we die; second, the Party does not trust us; and, third, the masses do not support us." They will carry on because they worry that the village as a whole may perish if they leave.

The patriotic Man

Ethnic Beining lost its autonomous status when Beijing upgraded it from a county government to a city government. Dashi Township received its current administrative status at the same time. Beining celebrated at the moment of upgrading by performing a series of activities based on Man legends. For most other ethnic groups, this would mean the point of total assimilation. For Dashi's Man people, however, their identification with the Chinese nation has always been strong. The moment of upgrading and the memorial performance of legends carried no sense of regret.

It is interesting to note that patriotic education is usually more serious for groups showing higher levels of assimilation, such as the She people in Lishui, Zhejiang, and the Tujia people in Yongshuen, Hunan. In contrast, the Dai people in Xishuangbana, Yunnan, the Muslim people in Litong, Ningxia, and the Korean people in Shenyang, Liaoning, show less enthusiasm for introducing patriotic

Plate 7 Garden decoration in a Man school, Beining, Liaoning, celebrating the return of Macao to China

activities. At least, the latter areas did not mention to me as a visitor that patriotism featured in their curriculum. I discuss these cases in later chapters.

To celebrate, Principal Wang recalled the convening of an art meeting at the time of Hong Kong's return to China. The Huashan villagers arranged plants at the front of classrooms in the shape of four Chinese characters: *au men hui gui*, meaning the return of Macao. When asked about his impression of Taiwan, one fifth-grader replied, "Taiwan is an undivided part of the motherland." This serious answer from an innocent mouth caused the listening adults to burst into laughter.

These experiences are common in the Han villages I visited previously, but uncommon in ethnic villages. Ethnic areas do not introduce themselves in patriotic terms, not because they are unpatriotic, but because patriotism does not convey their sense of being ethnic. For the local Man, patriotism seems to be a built-in element of their ethnic identity. Mr Guan, a Xibo teaching at Dashi Middle School, tells of his "total subscription to the notion of one Chinese nation" and comments:

> "Remember when the United States bombed our embassy? When I saw on the television that students from Northeastern University were fighting in the front [of the demonstration line], I could not stop my tears. I felt proud of us northeastern people. Having heard the news of bombing in Yugoslavia, I was ready in my mind to go there and spread all my blood on the spot and

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> die there. After class on the next day, we younger teachers discussed how we should look at this incident, understand it, and stand by the government. The only thing we can do is be good teachers, teach our students well, and tell them the truth in our thought education class. I teach them about US hegemony and our national shame. Every Chinese citizen should have the same feeling, including Taiwanese compatriots who share with us the same lineage. In 1990, I was in the Palace Museum with my child, where we ran into a gang of alien ghosts [*yangguizi*]. I told the child to scold them and that they would not understand anyway, but we would feel much better."

His example of the Palace Museum is noteworthy because the Palace Museum is supposedly a symbol of the decaying Manchu Dynasty, whose overthrow re-established the Chinese nation-state, which has been commanding patriotism ever since. As a Man intellectual, he was able to look at the museum from an entirely Han or Chinese perspective. This has effected a dramatic convergence with the viewpoints of those visitors who know the Manchu Dynasty from popular novels, movies, and television programs, and from official statements presenting the dynasty as the shame of the Chinese nation. Opposing foreigners from the Man perspective and opposing the Man from the Han and Chinese perspectives were not separable historically for him. For Mr Guan, therefore, being Man and being Chinese today appear to be one and the same.

Principal Wang recalls that teachers came to school much earlier on that day and held a meeting before the morning sessions. She spoke to students in the all-school mourning session convened for the incident. A young teacher, Ms Du, acknowledged her surprise when a third-grader wanted to discuss the incident with her. Another Man professor, Mr Lou (who escorted me to Dashi), analyzed the Yugoslavian bombing from a perspective that had virtually no Man element to it:

> "You should understand that this incident in Yugoslavia is meant to be an American test of how ready China is for challenge. From the geopolitical angle, you see that Britain is still working on some plot in Tibet, and the five central Asian countries intend to organize a new nation-state [at China's borders]. China must not show any weakness."

As far as it concerns Chinese nationalism, Man consciousness is completely absent in Dashi. Huashan Village Director Liu worried that the Chinese government might behave in a cowardly fashion towards this incident. If the government was not ready to fight the Americans, he felt that ordinary people would be just "like grass on top of the wall bowing to the wind." It is not hard to appreciate why the Man are taking the Chinese perspective. What one should note is that they are at the same time very involved emotionally.

It would be interesting to see how the Taiwanese, by comparison, have reacted to the bombing incident. Although many Taiwanese want to establish an independent state outside China, most would not deny that they are Chinese. In their

analysis, two modes of thinking dominate. One addresses the concern that the incident would destroy Sino-U.S. relations and backfire on Taiwan–China relations;[5] the other reveals the urge to take advantage of deteriorating Sino-U.S. relations and push the Taiwan independence movement.[6] Only a very small number of unification activists went to the U.S. consular office in Taipei to protest.

The contrast between the Dashi Man and the Taiwanese is not the knowledge that the Chinese are angry, but that the Taiwanese are not emotionally involved. This emotional incapacity clearly distinguishes the strong sense of being Chinese in the Man mentality – there is no Man consciousness in Dashi that does not at the same time include Chinese consciousness.

Man villagers' attitude toward Taiwan

Similar patriotic attitudes are better revealed on the issue of Taiwan. For villagers far from Taiwan in the mountains of northeastern China, the Taiwan issue is basically one of Chinese nationalism. While that is true for most people in China, one should wonder whether or not this nationalism is genuine or merely discursive. In other words, why would an ethnic people care, deep down in their hearts, about reunification with Taiwan if they do not feel directly related to the Han people in Taiwan, as the Han people on the mainland do? In other mountain areas I have visited, ethnic as well as Han, discussion about Taiwan was almost non-existent. Dashi villagers, however, were passionate about reunification, even though they had never met a Taiwanese before.

I will disregard the aforementioned fifth-grader, for his remarks on Taiwan being a part of the motherland sound very much like an examinee's line, reflecting no real feelings about reunification. Adult villagers surprised me because they constantly wanted to know how many people in Taiwan really wish to be independent from China. One would expect this question when meeting with Shanghai or Xiamen scholars of Taiwan studies. Scholars want to know the official policy rather than how people feel. Dashi villagers are interested in knowing what people in Taiwan want. This indicates a nationalistic, rather than a realistic, standpoint.

A useful case for comparison is perhaps the Koreans in Shenyang. One Korean school principal told me on one of my other study tours that he could sympathize with the situation of Taiwan because, he said, the Korean and the Chinese people are the only two remaining nations in the world that are split. Note that he was expressing his sympathy from a Korean standpoint since he was experiencing not the split of the Chinese people but that of the Koreans. In other words, the Korean principal does not conceive of his Korean ethnicity being defined by "Chineseness." The Dashi Man are unique precisely because Chineseness is intrinsic to Man ethnicity.

One widely overlooked parallel between the Man and the Taiwanese is that their leaders once ruled the whole of China and they both later suffered defeat. The different adjustments of each after their defeats may partly explain their respective viewpoints on China today. For the Man, they are Chinese and in that

sense continue to rule themselves. The Taiwanese leadership today has the option that it will no longer be Chinese and therefore can rule itself separately.

As a result, the Dashi Man heard everything said about Taiwan in terms of similarity to themselves. For example, they considered the Mandarin spoken by their Taiwanese visitor to be exactly the same language as the one they spoke, while in fact I had experienced all kinds of trouble with the local accent. When villagers heard that in Taiwan the government was organized into four levels – village, township, county, and province – the automatic response from almost all on the scene was, "Ah, it's all the same on the mainland." They lacked the cognitive skill to understand the difference. Their anxiety seemed to reflect the view that the more the similarities between Taiwan and China, the more comfortable people feel. Teachers were interested in knowing the contents of Taiwan's "quality education." Once they knew it was about ethics and civic education, the interest stopped and interviewees jumped to the easy conclusion that all descendants of the same ancestors taught their children in the same ways.

Most interesting were the toasts at the dining table. Villagers shouted "peaceful unification" when they drank. They truly believed that expressing a desire for peaceful unification was a good sentiment with which to welcome a Taiwanese visitor. In my limited visits to China, in addition to all but two villages where unification was never a topic, I have met a good number of officials from the Taiwan Office. When they toasted peaceful unification, to avoid embarrassing the Taiwanese visitor they would not say it repeatedly, and they certainly would not shout it. Dashi villagers were truly sincere and lovely; they happily celebrated the coming of a Taiwanese visitor as if this had been the day of peaceful unification.

In contrast with peaceful unification is the difficult question of armed "liberation." The Party Secretary of Beining City tried to comfort me by saying that liberation is no longer the policy. During the time of my visit, the Taiwanese government raised the notion of a state-to-state relationship and sent the media in China into furious denouncement. Village Secretary Guo of Dayi, one of the most zealous hosts, commented on the state-to-state idea:

> "For us in the mainland, when Taiwan becomes independent, the mainland must defeat you. We in the mainland do not want to use force. However, when the state-to-state theory really comes true and Taiwan is independent . . . come and calculate how big the mainland is. Taiwan is about the size of the distance from Jingzhou to here, only 800 *li* or so. We must defeat you. . . . See, Fujian has over 600 missiles. . . . Didn't the Americans tell you?"

The heavily indebted Huashan accountant, irrelevantly, cut in on his own remarks on village affairs with the following line: "Is it terrible to have a family split into four or five parts? To be split is not patriotic. Isn't it nice just to be together peacefully? We must defeat Taiwan whatever the cost. China always wins."

Other than those in Dashi, I have recorded two other incidents where the issue of unification was raised by my host. The first was a Tujia general manager

of a tobacco factory in Yongshuen. Like Dashi, Yongshuen is already deeply assimilated into the Han culture. Another incident was in a Tianjin Han neighborhood, where the village secretary warned against Taiwan independence at the lunch table.

Genuine assimilation

In all my encounters, I found no evidence of a specifically Man consciousness. Professor Lou, for example, explained more than once that he needed to act like a peasant when he escorted me to Dashi. The reason is that he came from Dashi originally and he was afraid that villagers might criticize him for being too scholarly or too oblivious of his peasant origin. He apparently struggled with being a peasant at home and being a scholar in front of a Taiwanese academic.

The point is not about this struggle, but that he felt no strain between being a Man at home and a Han with the visitor. This alludes to the third approach mentioned in the beginning of this chapter. Professor Lou does not scientifically study his own Man ethnicity feature by feature, nor does he introduce any Man elements to hybridize the notion of being Chinese. What he demonstrates is that a Man must be Chinese at the same time.

Director Liu at Huashan expresses this unique overlapping in one concise sentence: "We do not speak Man because we were Han before." He acknowledged that "our ancestors were Man and we became Man again when [the government] put us in the Man category." In other words, for the current generation, they were first Han and then Man. The switch of ethnic status means little to them, even in terms of policy privileges. The only policy privilege, as mentioned earlier, is some relaxation of birth control policies and entrance examination requirements.

Being Man is more cognitive than affective in the sense that people do not feel the need to switch. Switching is fine since discursively no one will challenge their Man lineage. Interestingly, awareness of an ethnic bloodline is enough to sustain a Man identity, whereas it is not with other ethnic groups such as the She in Liushui, the Bai in Dali, and the Tujia in Yongshuen. The Man are, nevertheless, secure being both Chinese and Man. One reason is that Man culture has such a strong historical existence that the Han acknowledge the distinct identity of the Man even after their assimilation into Han culture. In contrast, once groups like the She and Tujia are assimilated, their ethnic identity appears never to have existed. Most Han people would be ignorant of their history and would hold it of no account even if they did know of it. All Han people know about the Manchu Dynasty, just as they know about the Palace Museum, Nuerhachi, or even, much earlier in history, the story of the Nyuzhen people and the Jin Dynasty (widely believed to be the origin of the Man). Beining cadres continually brought up the stories about Nuerhachi during the visit. Stories, positive as well as negative, representing and historicizing the Man as a legitimate ethnic category serve to provide an ethnic identity beyond challenge. No one questions whether there is such an ethnic identity as Man, even though the meaning of being Man has long been obscure.

Plate 8 Manchuria's sacred mountain of Yiwulyu, Beining, Liaoning

Second, the Man are comfortable with being assimilated because assimilation was their own choice in the period when they ruled the Han following the Manchu victory, so they do not have the postcolonial type of resistance.[7] Unlike most other ethnic groups facing the pressure of assimilation, which worry about the death of ethnic traditions, the Man in Dashi are not concerned with these features. They view their own ethnicity from the position of strength given by their period of rule over China.

A third reason for the Man's ease about their identity is that the Man extend into the northeastern part of China and are therefore more conspicuous than smaller ethnic groups such as the Naxi in Yunnan or Koreans in Shenyang. Related is the widespread practice of intermarriage between the Man and the Han. The calculated nature of the choice of children in these mixed families either to become Man or to remain Han further obscures Man consciousness.

Although the Han revolutionaries provoked anti-Man sentiment among the population in the last twenty years of the Manchu Dynasty, this quickly ended after the establishment of the Republic of China. For the Man in Dashi Township, their being Chinese does not involve special learning. Rather, it is their Man consciousness that needs to be brought into focus. However, Man consciousness is a product not of exchange for policy privilege, or of unique customs or values, or of postcolonial resistance to total assimilation, but of a historical image the existence of which all Chinese have taken for granted.

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Conclusion

For postmodernists, ethnicity is a product of discursive practice, for postcolonialists a position from which to articulate resistance against cultural hegemony, and for liberal social scientists a group of characteristics to be tested and falsified. The case of the Man in Dashi, Beining, provides a new possibility. Here ethnicity is not defined by any specific features or characteristics. Being part of a minority ethnic group and being Chinese are in perfect harmony. Actually they are not two separate concepts. The Man are Chinese in all respects. Man consciousness comes from the Chinese perspective that sees a separate Man origin. That this origin is not challenged, or considered irrelevant, as it is in the case of assimilated She or Tujia, is probably because of the 287-year rule of the Manchu Dynasty, a history of imperialist intrusion of which few Man feel proud.

The ways in which the Dashi Man understand Chinese patriotism and reunification with Taiwan are not results of a cultural hegemony that excludes Man ethnicity. They are the results of the lack of Man ethnicity. To be Man in Beining is to know the story of Yiwulyu Mountain and of Nuerhachi, as all Chinese do. Therefore, for them, to understand the Taiwan issue is similar to understanding it from the Chinese perspective.

The Dashi villagers do not distinguish themselves with any uniqueness in language, clothing, religion, custom, or any other symbols of being Man that exist outside the state and the market. Because the Man were once rulers of China, it is natural that for them Chinese nationalism has become a built-in element of their consciousness. Contrary to the development of postcolonial hybridity, Man ethnicity and consciousness in Beining include everything that is Chinese without the need to make any adaptation.

7 Drawing out She characteristics in Lishui, Zhejiang

Models of adaptation

Minority ethnic groups in China are increasingly exposed to forces of transformation through contact with the state and the market. Ethnic citizens have been learning how to adapt to these forces. Indeed, in the name of modernization and globalization, forces of transformation are able to instill into these areas a lifestyle and a value system that formerly prevailed mainly outside ethnic areas. The expectation of the state is that eventually minorities will have to experience cultural conversion and assimilation. This will be good for ethnic citizens, it is believed, because assimilation will make them identical with the Han majority and prepare them for their equal participation in state and market activities.

Previous studies suggest, however, that ethnic minorities have adapted in various ways, giving the appearance of assimilation into one culture while retaining and inventing a range of values that are unfamiliar and unattractive to the Han majority. Most importantly, the ethnic identities of these minority areas have acquired hybrid components to the extent that some scholars view the assimilation seemingly dominant in the official discourses on ethnic citizenship as insignificant. In other words, the inclusion of a modern self-image in ethnic identity does not mean much in a postmodern age where all familiar boundaries are breaking down.[1]

It is true that ethnic identities historically constructed through conventions, stories, and policies are discursive in nature and will continue to be so in the modern age.[2] It is also true that "civilizing" forces will not totally transform ethnic groups into one single global identity. Nevertheless, the way ethnic citizens adapt to "civilizing" forces varies in accordance with the existing identity strategies of each particular group. The identity strategy in a particular area is therefore especially relevant in determining the choice, conscious or not, of the local people in their adaptation to "civilizing" forces. The postmodern and hybrid nature of these strategies should not distract scholars from understanding each of them in their own way.[3]

My own research in China indicates that *ex ante* logic or modeling is never sufficient in categorizing the diversity emerging in ethnic areas. Each study tour may encounter a new, creative way of adaptation that is beyond the comprehension of strangers. For example, in Yongshuen the Miao and Tujia are comfortable

with their lack of ethnic uniqueness other than the fact that they receive policy privileges. In contrast, Koreans in Shenyang have been able to persuade the state to promote their mother tongue in exchange for their double identity of being Korean Chinese. In Ali Mountain, Taiwan, in comparison, the Zou people creatively instill environmentalism into their ethnic self-identity, while acknowledgment of underdevelopment is an innate element of Xishuangbanna's Dai people's identity in response to the Han's "civilizing" projects. The most creative seem to be the Muslims in Litong, Ningxia, where people return to the Muslim spiritual world only after a certain age and allow the state and the mosque to govern different stages of their life (see Chapter 9).[4]

Without any specific theoretical predilection, this chapter will introduce us to yet another strategy of adaptation, that of the She people in Lishui, Zhejiang.

Background

The She people live in the southeastern part of China, primarily in Fujian and Zhejiang. This chapter reports interviews with She cadres in Lishui, Zhejiang. Although in general the She's economic condition is better than that of most minorities residing in mountainous areas, they are nonetheless poorer than their nearby Han neighbors. Analyses of interview scripts show that, in the She cadres' perception, the state's She policy contains three elements: high priority for the provision of resources for local activities, the promotion of She cadres into high positions, and support of education and cultural policy to preserve She customs.

Because of the constraints of time and transportation, the interviews did not take place in the poorest areas. The local officials responsible for my visit judged that a visit to the only autonomous She county or the only autonomous She township would take up time that could be spent more usefully in seeing other She villages in non-autonomous counties and townships. Nonetheless, all but two of the cadres I interviewed are She, and She are in the majority in all the villages I visited.

The interviews were conducted in She villages and She schools as well as county offices. Almost all interviewees appeared concerned about the preservation of a She identity. In addition, they care very much about their economic status and the balance between the pursuit of a higher economic status and the preservation of their ethnic identity. Interviewees include officials of the Taiwan Affairs Office in both Lishui City and the subordinate Suichang County, education officials in Suichang, village directors and Party secretaries in Houjiang and Houlong villages in Suichang and Chengxi Village in Lishui, schoolteachers at elementary schools in these villages, cadres of ethnic normal schools in Lishui, and general managers and cadres at Hualuen Wood Manufacturing in Shilian Township, Suichang.

The only She autonomous county is Jingning, but it was too far away to fit into my interview itinerary. The only autonomous township is Sanren, but its village schools are not as characteristic as other She elementary schools; Houlong Elementary School, for example, is well known in Zhejiang. Except for the one in Houjiang Elementary School, all my interviews lasted over two hours.

Although Suichang is not an autonomous county, it has a high proportion of She residents, and the Suichang government is especially sensitive to ethnic affairs. This is particularly true in the area of education, as the Party Documents No. 49 in 1993 and No. 36 in 1997 indicate. According to Document No. 36, for example, education policy should provide increased funds for construction to She schools and a high quota for She students to enter high school. The principle of She policy in the areas of education and culture is

> to abide by the policy stipulated in "Working Rules for Administration in She Townships," – that is, "the superior government of an ethnic township should, in its budget, allow flexible financing for the ethnic township." [Suichang] had the policy in the 1997/98 budget year to return all the agricultural taxes from the She people of Sanren Township to the township for the construction of infrastructure and to preserve all the tax revenues above the set target for the township government to use at its own discretion.

The same document states that:

> [Suichang's] cultural sectors should strengthen the cultural development in Sanren by satisfactorily managing the She cultural and emertainment center in the township, applying to join the regional program of "Mountain Flower," and making sure that movies on scientific education, cultural and art performance, and technological films be sent to villages. All relevant government branches should monitor and support ethnic minorities to organize traditional cultural activities and work hard on drawing out, putting into order, researching, and enhancing the traditional culture of the She people.

The origin of She consciousness

Interviews suggest that all cadres are very concerned about the preservation of the She identity, especially in the area of education and personnel. School entrance examinations at all levels have set a minimum quota for She examinees. This quota is a part of government planning. She examinees basically compete with other She students and not directly with other Han students taking the examinations. The current personnel policy is always to give priority to recruiting eligible She cadres.

What is interesting about these policies is the widespread assumption that She ethnicity is defined only in terms of bloodlines. Any policy that helps people believed to have She blood is considered good She policy, despite the potential detriment these policies may have on She consciousness or characteristics. In short, the government is not sensitive to the changes in cultural and social environments that are probably essential to the preservation of She ethnic identity.

The government's ignorance of the cultural dimension of She ethnicity may create pressure on She leaders who are concerned with the meaning of being a

member of the She. For the government, the reason for helping She students receive higher education is exclusively economic, aiming at their faster assimilation into modern society by preparing them for occupational training and job opportunities. The problem with this narrow kind of education, and one that the government seems to overlook, is that it leads to a She identity increasingly deprived of uniqueness. This may explain why it is natural for many She interviewees to stress the notion of "extricating" or "drawing out" (*wajue*, literally "digging out") She characteristics, as quoted earlier from Document No. 36.

What do She cadres themselves see to be their identity? Mr Lan Zongyi, an official from the Bureau of Religion of Lishui City, points to religion. The She religion is no different from the Han religion in its content. Both are Daoist, worshiping Heavenly Master (*tianshi*) Zhang. The difference lies in the style and the language used in their worship. As Lan explains rather sadly,

> "Our way of building the Dao setting is different from the Han's way. The connection between She ethnicity and religious ritual is being lost. Once we have the setting, we can show our religion. This must be given to the next generation by this generation. The ritual is very complicated and we traditionally conducted it for seven days and seven nights. Nobody likes to conduct the ceremony now, for it would cost too much time, labor, and resources. What young person wants to learn this? It is useless. Except that the older people may tell the younger people about it, the old stuff is discarded as useless rubbish. The development of science is resulting in the loss of the ritual. Once students graduate from high school, they go directly into the job market. Those who are left in the mountains are the old people. Their holy books are hand-written, kept by some old priests. When they practice [their religion], they conduct the ceremony together in a group of six or eight. Nobody gets paid. Today the current ceremony will finish in three days and three nights. Relatives and friends will come. If they do not know how to conduct the ceremony, they just don't conduct it. The priests learn it from their masters or from practicing it. The origin is Daoist and this is preserved through mountain songs."

Most She villagers live in low mountains or at the foot of a mountain, because it is too difficult to live in the high mountains. In Jingning County, there is no She village above 800 meters, for example. Few She people live in the plains. This contributes to the popularity of mountain songs among the She. Principal Lan of the Chengxi Village School observes that few She enjoy living in the city. The geographical separation strengthens some ritual differences between the She and the Han regarding gift-giving for funerals, weddings, birthdays, and so on, as Mr Lan explains:

> "To celebrate a birthday, all relatives and friends come at the beginning of the year, not on the day of [the year's] birth, but typically in the first month of the Chinese lunar calendar. If a woman is celebrating her sixtieth year,

> her first daughter must prepare the funeral cloth for her and visitors want to see it. We are different from the Han as regards both funerals and weddings. For the Han, people bring candles and come to eat. We She people must 'support the family' by bringing wood for burning, beans, rice, or anything related to living, most of the time foods such as pork."

From what a person brings, Principal Lan says that she can tell the visitor's relationship with the dead. For example, sons-in-law should bring a pig's head and seven different grains. However, she finds that as time goes by, more people are giving money as a substitute.

Except for educated people, few She understand how different they are from the Han. The easiest way to distinguish a She from a Han for an outsider is to look at the surname. The She people in Lishui belong to three surname groups: Lan, Lei, and Zhong. In my interviews, I did not get to meet the Zhongs. This way of making a distinction is for visitors' use; for the She people themselves, the distinguishing feature is the language.

She is a spoken language without written form even in Pinyin (the romanized form of Chinese). People learn their language in the family. Most villagers in Lishui still speak She, but in the city, some She families are losing the ability to speak the language, especially in the intermarried households. Families with stronger She consciousness send their children to the villages to live with grandparents during vacations and these young people can learn the language very quickly – even in a single summer. Han villagers living in She neighborhoods can also pick up the She language.

Language and consciousness

Since it is by language that the She people identify with one another, it would be worth noting how people understand the meaning of speaking the She language. Ms Lan, director of teaching at Chengxi School, feels that She "is unlikely to disappear since it passes through families generation by generation," and she finds that She families are conscious of this. In school, however, the policy is that the She language is not allowed in class. The She people actually support this policy because they want their children to learn Mandarin well since She, lacking a written form, is inadequate for modern learning.

Director Lan points out that She students need language translation in their first year of school. In Chengxi, there are four She teachers. If there were no She teachers, the students would encounter difficulties in learning course material written in Chinese and taught in Mandarin. This is the case in Houjiang School, where the only She faculty member is the principal. Director Lan admits that use of the She language has dwindled at Chengxi, but she acknowledges that She students speak to her in She outside the classroom. However, the language policy for schools varies for each school. Principal Lei at Houjiang does not allow anyone to speak She in school, even during the breaks or outside the classroom.

Concerning his much stricter language policy, Principal Lei explains that two-thirds of the population in Houjiang are She and students can express themselves in She easily. He has to restrain this tendency strictly, otherwise students would not learn Mandarin effectively. He does not agree with bilingual education, popular in some other areas such as Yunnan, because She has no written form. His all-Han faculty members are not able to use the She language anyway. According to Mr Lou, an education official of Suichang County, the She population is too dispersed to allow for efficient teaching of the language.

Principal Liang Jianguo of Zhejiang Ethnic Normal College offers She language classes to students nonetheless. He understands that the She language is the symbol of She ethnicity and thinks that teachers going to She areas should speak the language in order to establish the good relationships with villagers essential to providing sound education in village schools. Chengxi usually invites normal-school students to teach mountain songs and lead outdoor athletic activities.

A turning point in ethnic consciousness emerged when Chinese central television broadcast a program, *Wind from the She Mountains*, introducing local She customs through a synthesis of a number of She mountain songs. Suichang communities watching the program, which the Lishui government had helped to put together, were proud and elated. Since the broadcast, teaching She mountain songs has become an essential part of the curriculum. Since mountain songs are sung in the She vernacular, the use of this ethnic tongue was officially recognized overnight. The local normal school now requires students to learn the She vernacular, and its students go to elementary schools to teach mountain songs. This is the only time when the language is officially allowed in class and, as Mr Ye Kaiping, director of teaching at the normal school, points out, this is why the teaching of mountain songs is always welcome in villages.

Learning Mandarin is related to economic development, as most cadres realize. Most villagers are willing to lend money to relatives whose child needs it for higher education. Mr Lan, director of Chengxi Village, says that education is the foundation for developing the economy. He himself is an example. He has a background in technological education and has successfully persuaded the villagers to plant vegetables, which has brought the village unprecedented wealth.

Only those educated to junior-high level are able to read the manuals, according to Mr Lan. This realization prompts him occasionally to prepare gifts for teachers in order to keep them there. He has also started a research institute in the village to study vegetable-planting. He assembles the twenty households that achieved the best level of production in the previous year in order to learn from them certain practices for planting vegetables suitable for the Lishui climate.

Principal Lan of Chengxi summarizes rather pessimistically her feelings about primary education as related to She ethnicity. Although the Lishui government gives Chengxi the title of "ethnic school" and she receives all sorts of privileges from the United Front Department, she herself knows very little concerning She traditions. She notes, "The heredity of tradition is unknown to us as we open our eyes and realize that there is nothing ethnic in our school."

The irony is that the economic development made possible by the success of education has bred a sense of pride in Village Director Lan's assessment of his own achievement:

> "In summary, there were three totally unthinkable things: it was unthinkable that ethnic minorities could live in cement houses; it was unthinkable that we did not need to carry water on our shoulders any longer when we cultivated the fields; it was unthinkable that every household should have a color television and a refrigerator. The useless become the useful. Everything is electric and we do not have to cut wood any longer."

The pride one takes in economic success and the sense of loss in knowing little of one's ethnic traits are not consistent. This is probably why the question of how to extricate ethnic characteristics is so important in many cadres' minds.

Principal Liang sees the problem and wants She students not only to study well at the normal school but also to learn activities that have ethnic characteristics. This has led to the development of She ethnic athletic activities in the Lishui areas. It turns out that the students from the normal school are an essential component of the Zhejiang Athletic team in the annual national competition. She students perform well, Principal Liang says:

> "Chair-playing, among those items for which we received the first-rate award, is a She activity, for example. The Commission of Athletics looks highly upon this activity. In Zhejiang, chair-playing is a reserved program in all athletic competitions. We try to improve our techniques every year. We are the first normal school in the province that opened a music class. The She people are good at dancing and singing, including 'mountain songs' and 'couple songs.' We are behind in arts class and in our attempts to research and organize things. In our cultural classes, we offer ethnic history and language for the She students. We teach them the She spoken language and offer them courses on She customs. Calligraphy is one of the features. Many of our students win awards for their calligraphy."

The reality of She education is not completely promising, as Principal Lei of Houjiang points out that he lacks teachers who can teach She athletics activities. This lack brings us to perhaps the almost legendary school of Houlong, which is lauded as the model for the extricating of cultural characteristics in Zhejiang.

Extricating She characteristics

Houlong Village School has a fine tradition and a national reputation. The slogan of the village cadres is "the symbiosis of village and school" *(cun xiao yiti)*. The school has received so much publicity that the Suichang government grants it 2000 renminbi each year, and the village council 3000. Mr Luo Jianguo, Commissioner of Education at Suichang, praises the school:

Plate 9 A She schoolgirl in Lishui, Zhejiang, performing the "star reach" for visitors

"They combine the education of modern scientific culture and the collection of mountain songs and dances. Few other schools know how to do this. As to traditional She athletic activities, they competed in the Second Ethnic Athletic Cup, representing Zhejiang, performing 'star reach' [*chuogang*], and were placed second. This showcases the She's traditional athletics. The retired principal, Mr Lan Guanshu, is very reliable. We offer indigenous education and ask them to supplement it with local experiences. They organize their own materials and do very well. Their principal was once a member of the delegation to Japan."

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Houlong Village is under the jurisdiction of Dazhi Township. Suichang's director of Taiwan Affairs used to be the principal at Dazhi Township School and knows Lan Guanshu very well. He explained the meaning of "village–school symbiosis," which Lan Guanshu first envisioned four decades ago. This slogan means that the school becomes an agricultural school during the evening and all school facilities are open to villagers. While Mr Lou at the Commission of Education emphasizes that "Education must individualize every student and treat every student equally," so that all She students are assimilated into the Han, this is not the case in Houlong, which he praises. In Houlong, ethnic classes are formal classes, not extra-curricular activities. Education is not limited to students, but extended to all villagers. (Chengxi School makes a similar effort by teaching the villages' illiterate young married women.) Under the guidance of Lan Guanshu, Mr Lei, the new principal, seems determined to make the ethnic school truly ethnic:

> "We must fully develop and create our own characteristics. First of all, practicing the trinity of family, society, and school in our education and making the school a learning and entertaining garden for the She villagers and a model for village education. Second, extricating and emphasizing She traditions such as industry, bravery, sincerity, and singing and dancing, engaging in the teaching of She songs, dances, and athletic activities, and establishing an art team known as Little Phoenix (since we came from Phoenix Mountain a long time ago). Third, consolidating the young vanguard corps, enriching activities with ethnic characteristics, teaching normative activities and news-related activities to educate the She youth. These include the program of 'I for the She country,' Party education, the revolutionary history of the She people, dispatching a student representative to participate in the return of Hong Kong, and also the development of She songs, especially those with She characteristics. We are 'the flower of ethnic education.' The school has terminated the village's underdevelopment that existed at the time of liberation. Our literacy rate is 96 percent."

One must remember that Houlong is nonetheless a mountain school. It is approximately a twenty-minute walk from the paved road. The source of income is the planting and growing of tea, but this has not been a stable source in the past twenty years. Village director Mr Cheng, a Han, promises to provide 3000 renminbi each year to support the school. This testifies to the village–school symbiosis. In fact, the village council consults Lan Guanshu on all important village issues, although he is not a member of the council. He advises the council on all important budgeting items.

Lan Guanshu is more respected than any other cadre in the village, or even in the township. Under his leadership, the school has grown to twenty-three rooms, an incredible size for a village school anywhere in China. One of the rooms is the athletic room with ethnic facilities, which was built entirely by the villagers. The school library possesses an unbelievable 9000 items, compared with the

Dazhi township school library, which possesses only 5000, itself a surprisingly high number. It was Lan Guanshu who recruited the current Dazhi Township School's principal, Mr Lei, to be his superior. Mr Lan himself was recruited directly by Suichang County. Mr Lei of Dazhi gives his perspective on the Houlong success:

> "The school was able to grow quickly after 1956. First of all, we had a village leadership that emphasized education. Each term of leadership provided a fixed amount of money to buy books and to manage the school. Second, we have a strong faculty team, whose average age now is only 23 and each of them has a specialty. They are all very devoted teachers and have a good record. Third, our school models itself after the ethnic characteristics of the She people. Whenever we have art or intellectual activities, we always include She characteristics. This is why villagers support us. Fourth, the united front and ethnic branches of the government support us. Fifth, we want to have great achievements so we serve all villagers, all high-school students; even college students find our school useful. We are the center of cultural development in the region."

I see villagers both inside and outside the school frequently. Before they enter, they put out their cigarettes and clean the bottom of their shoes. On the school walls, there are all kinds of patriotic slogans. All children, teachers, and villagers keep a set of ethnic clothing. With the school being the center of patriotic education, the school is almost a substitute for the Party division in the village.

The Party Secretary, Ms Xia, is a Han. Both she and Director Cheng are newly elected, replacing a younger team that failed to improve the village economy during its term. Cheng and Xia are surprisingly ignorant about the process of election. Their election was the first ever held in the village's history. Director Cheng said he was not responsible for it and Secretary Xia knew little about it. It is obvious that their mandate is to regroup the village economy and that the election was a formality. There is no doubt that Lan Guanshu is the true center of policy in Houlong. He holds no official position, though. He is nonetheless active, singing two songs and leading children to welcome visitors while dressed in his ethnic clothing. He commands everyone's respect and is himself the epitome of a She villager.

The relevance of She characteristics in reality

From the Han's perspective, the policy is that Mandarin be spoken consistently throughout all school years, with perhaps the only exception being the Koreans in the northeast. The ethnic normal school looks on capability in Mandarin as key in its curriculum design. Principal Liang talks about the achievement and the constraints:

> "The Mandarin education program at our school is ranked number one in the Lishui area. Our students must reach at least the first level of rank 2. This means they must score at least 80 to graduate. The pass rate for our students is 100 percent. Among them, thirty-four reach the second level of rank 1, ready to enter the profession of radio broadcasting. More of them teach. We are granted the title of the vanguard group of national ethnic unity. . . . Spoken Mandarin is only the foundation, on which one needs to enhance the faculty of expression. This takes time, and in general, students are weak in the ability to organize [speech]. They need to acquire practical experience in the process of teaching."

The Han government is very concerned with the recruitment of She students in higher education and the promotion of She cadres to higher positions. There are nine ethnic schools in Suichang, and Houjiang and Honking were among the first group to be approved in 1955. The first ethnic high school began to operate in 1993. The proportion of She students at all levels is about 7 percent in Suichang; that of She teachers, 9 percent. They are spread among sixteen townships. She school cadres account for 11 percent of the total number of cadres. Suichang's Education Commission and the United Front Bureau usually announce the Party's ethnic policy in their annual working meetings. They call on ethnic teachers and students and bring small gifts on Teachers' Day and Children's Day. Every township is required to construct at least one facility for each ethnic school. The ethnic desk of the county government is specifically responsible for improving electronic teaching facilities. A small allowance is paid for every ethnic student.

As a result, school attendance by She students has increased dramatically over the decades. In 1998, the rate of entry at the elementary level was 100 percent and, at the junior high level, 95 percent. The dropout rate for the same year was 1 percent. Twelve She students have entered high school, with only one of them below the minimum score required for ordinary students. It appears that She students have caught up with Han students quickly in the past few years.

In order to improve the education level of the She people, the Suichang government uses Houjiang Middle School to start a distance agricultural school. There are five She teachers at the middle school, according to its principal, Mr Lei. The year 1999 marked the eleventh year for the agricultural school. According to Commissioner Luo, 520 students have passed professional tests, while over 3000 have acquired professional positions. Principal Lei is about to receive the title of Vanguard of the Agricultural School.

Suichang Tax Bureau similarly uses Houjiang School for tax education and has awarded the school the title of the Vanguard Collective Unit of the Tax Law. The Bureau organizes a youth tax school, promoting tax knowledge to adults through children. The reason for using the ethnic school is that the Tax Bureau has relatively easy access to the school, especially since peasant households are spread widely throughout the mountains.

Not all policies of the Han government take into account She needs. For example, in order to achieve economies of scale, the government demands that each school must have a certain number of students, and schools have to combine if they fail to reach this size. The rationale of the policy is to reduce the cost of education and to enhance the efficiency of school facilities. Many She village schools do not reach the scale. Recent success in birth control policy has exacerbated the shortage of students in She schools.

For example, even though the ethnic normal school has grown by enlisting Han students and providing more tuition, it will still be required to combine with Lishui Normal College. The new school will be called Zhejiang Ethnic Normal College. In Houlong, the supposed vanguard school will have to close soon for the same reason. If this occurs, the new school will not have the title of Ethnic School. For Commissioner Luo, this is fine, since education should be the same in all schools anyway. Despite the fact that Houlong's curricula include all sorts of ethnic programs, the commissioner is determined that the ethnic tradition be preserved only through family channels.

Coming to the area of production, Han people have the feeling that there is no difference between ethnic groups. In Houjiang Village, where the She villagers form an absolute majority, it is probably coincidental that villagers allowed to switch to vegetable-planting are predominantly She. Director Lei argues that permission to switch is solely determined by the positioning of the roads that have been built. He acknowledges nonetheless that eventually all villagers will switch. His personal goal is to improve the economic condition of the She people.

Houlong appears blind to ethnicity in terms of productive work since both Director Cheng and Secretary Xia, who were called on to rescue the village economy, are Han. In Chengxi, many young She people leave the village for good to go to Han areas, only returning if they are not successful after the age of 35. Director Lan sees no connection between ethnicity and production, since their wealth would have been much greater than it is now had they stayed in the village.

The general manager of a locally well-known factory, Hualuen Wood Manufacturing, has recruited workers from the She villages; they now amount to 30 percent of all employees. He pays little attention to ethnicity in recruitment decisions. His impression of She workers is "those alcohol-lovers" and "those who speak She."

Mr Lan Xiangguo, County Vice-Director of Suichang, sees the She people as having their own way of getting rich in recent years. He cautioned visitors to note that "She" as a Chinese character combines three other characters: "show" (*shi*), "people" (*ren*), "field" (*tian*), meaning that the She people live by the cultivation of fields.

It was very impressive to see Mr Wang Guohua, Director of Lishui Taiwan Affairs and a Han, demonstrate how friendly the small She shop-owners in Dazhi Township were by walking randomly into two shops. Each time, the hosts prepared tea before even asking who the strangers walking into their shops were. They insisted that we take some samples of their agricultural produce without any charge.

"Privatization" of the She identity

The She cadres are all conscious of their ethnic identity, although they may not be too sure what this might mean in modern times. The most frequently mentioned feature of the She identity is the spoken She language. However, as reform continues, the She and the Han are increasingly coming into contact, and therefore Mandarin is being used in all public places. In order to help their business, the She people are compelled to use the Zhejiang dialect (used in the marketplace) at first and then Mandarin at a later stage. Almost all She people speak all three languages. This means that She is no longer essential in public life, so that it is becoming restricted to personal use, such as for expressing intimacy.

Unlike the situation in other minority areas, She identity is not seen to be in crisis because the Han people in the neighborhood generally do not speak She. Although it is not used in school, in the market, on television, or in factories, the language is nevertheless now reserved for specific private occasions. The result is that She identity is legitimate only in private.

The tendency to restrict She identity to private occasions is also present in school education. As Houlong School's patriotic and thought education indicates, the She cadres are even more aggressive in promoting a greater Chinese identity than schoolteachers in Han villages. The loyalty of the She villagers to the Chinese state may explain to a large extent the sympathy all Han cadres have towards the work of "extricating" ethnic She characteristics. For the Han cadres, the practice of Lishui's She education has more than proved that there cannot be any conflict between the Chinese and the She identities.

On the other hand, government policy says that the She identity is the foundation of policy privileges and decisions on personnel. Since the government does not know what, otherwise, it means to be a She, and the She people are not aware of what characteristics their ethnic status has in the public arena, the meaning of the term "drawing out" is rich and fluid. Cadres, Han and She alike, routinely use this term in the discussion of policy. It implies that there is already something there to be extricated (dug out). The term leads one to look for She characteristics back in history rather than in the future, and suggests that an exploration of these characteristics does not square with the future-oriented market activities with which people are preoccupied today. The mentality involved in the extricating discourse also reflects a conviction of the essence of the She's ethnic status.

Under these circumstances, it is not surprising to see how the She cadres emphasize and enjoy the teaching and performance of mountain songs and ethnic athletic activities. Athletic activities are quite simple in their original form. New forms have been developed in recent years and the essence of She identity is thereby consolidated. Mountain songs carry the She language, which is not otherwise allowed in school. They are even sung on television now. Performances like these attract students to the language, and the She language has a much better chance of being preserved.

Plate 10 Pictures of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, and Mao in a She elementary school, Lishui, Zhejiang

In short, mountain songs and ethnic athletic activities bring the She identity and language to the public, even though the language is not being widely spoken. The work of extricating creates a new public place for the She identity without intruding on the existing public place familiar to the Han cadres. In fact the She people are helping to strengthen those public places that the Han cadres care about the most.

Conclusion

Contact between civilizations or cultures challenges existing boundaries. Reform in China is one such occasion where ethnic minorities and Han must meet. The ethnic policy of the government reflects the Han's image of the minorities: economic underdevelopment, lack of education, lack of real loyalty to the state, ideological indifference, and shortage of personnel. Ethnic groups welcome the government's help on all these accounts. As a result, the Han majority consider that the ethnic groups are improving themselves with the government's help, while the ethnic groups feel a sense of loss. However, the ethnic groups themselves may not be ready to explain the reason to the Han government.

This sense of loss is expressed in different ways depending on the existing identity strategy of the ethnic minority in question. The subsequent adaptation strategy varies accordingly. For the She people in the Lishui area, their

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uniqueness lies in the fact that their language is historically essential to their self-image. Although they are losing traditional religious rituals that carry the language, mountain songs are coming to the rescue. Hitherto, the language has been restricted to private occasions, but mountain songs are bringing it back to the public. Ethnic athletic activities similarly have become a fad, not without good reason. Athletic activities do not need a spoken language in their performance and yet they publicize She characteristics.

One may question how real or unique mountain songs and athletic activities really are. The lesson, however, is that the She want to maintain a distinction from the Han and they are finding creative ways of doing so. Ironically, without the "civilizing" projects and forces of transformation said to modernize them, the She people would not be so interested in the quest for new dimensions of the She identity.

Part IV

Ethnic religion

The adaptation of Islam

For many groups, religion is intrinsic to ethnic identity. Islam provides one of the most effective religious conventions that drive in-group identity formation. In Part IV, we see that Islam is playing an important role in reviving and maintaining ethnic consciousness of both the areas I interviewed: Changde and Litong. However, Islam means very different things to the people of these two areas. First of all, modernization is a concern in both areas. Islam is the natural site of identity in the process of modernization. In Changde, Islam is practiced in a very unorthodox manner, while in Litong it is not practiced with any strictness in the first half of a person's life. Nevertheless, in Litong, Islam is a part of life. One can see it everywhere. In Changde, in contrast, signs of Islam are meager. History, geography, and politics together explain the differences between these two areas.

Uygurs in Changde, Hunan, have made a distinction among three things: ethnicity, religion, and customs. As a result, young Uygurs do not practice Islam and they eat pork; some study Islam but still eat pork, whereas senior Uygur party cadres follow Islamic customs such as not eating pork but without practicing Islam as a religion. This is the subject of Chapter 8. The rising ethnic consciousness of recent years has to do with outside attention to the Uygurs' presence in Changde and their resumption of religious activities. In education and government policy, however, there is an implicit tendency to consider Uygur status as imagined blood kinship. The reality is that intermarriage with Muslims has become more frequent, and the revival of Islamic belief depends on Muslim support. Chapter 8 argues that the existing theoretical framework on Chinese ethnicity is not adequate to explain and interpret the seeming irony of religious revival and pork consumption.

Chapter 9 examines one instance of Muslim life in an attempt to discern the meaning of becoming a citizen in modern China. I would like to use the case study to open the range of possibilities in terms of the relationship between religious identity and state identity. In the case of Muslims, as in other cases, the state teaches ethnic citizens to put their citizenship into practice through education, the market, and political mobilization. In addition, there are policy privileges specifically for Muslims. People participate in citizenship and receive privileges as individual citizens, which makes their Muslim identity irrelevant. This does

not mean that the state wants to relax "Muslim" as a category of identity. On the contrary, it continues to need Muslim culture as a target for its "civilizing" projects. Indeed, the state is effective in occupying the agendas of Muslims with secular matters such as economic production, ideological indoctrination, and political organization. However, Chapter 9 reports how Muslims in the case study area have creatively adapted to the state's mobilization and maintained their identities outside both market and state. The negotiation between Muslims and the state appears so subtle that even Muslims themselves are not necessarily conscious of their identity strategy. What happens to the "civilizing" projects is that Muslim people defer their dedication to Muslim life until the age of 40 or so when they have the economic capacity to make donations for the building of mosques and to engage in a pilgrimage to Mecca. Conscious or not, these Muslim strategies of identity will remain effective in resisting the seemingly inevitable impacts of the rise of modernity on Muslim consciousness.

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Intermarriage does not change the legal fact that one belongs to only one parent's ethnic group. In Western Hunan, for example, Tujia, who historically accepted imperial titles, and Miao, who consistently resisted titles, often found themselves in conflict.[3] Intermarriage, however, has not been considered rebellious since 1949, when the People's Republic was set up, and since the 1980s has become quite common in places such as Fenghuang County.[4] This would have been hard for the ancestors of both groups to envision. Nonetheless, the government is by no means interested in creating a new category for children of mixed couples. Legally, they have to be either a Tujia or a Miao.

For students of Chinese ethnicity, this is sufficient warning that one cannot simply look at the legal status of interviewees to conclude that one is studying such and such a group. Whatever adaptation a legally ethnic person has made in his or her life does not immediately tell us anything definite about the ethnic group that person identifies with. We must be conscious of the limits of the scope to which the result of our research can apply. It would be particularly interesting to see how a clearly adapting as well as adapted group understands its own ethnicity. For this reason, I went to Changde, Hunan, to speak with Uygurs in the Uygur–Muslim townships. I wanted to find out how Uygurs who have practiced intermarriage with Muslims and lived isolated in a largely Han community saw themselves.

The Uygur–Muslim township, by virtue of its name, has legally transcended the ethnic boundaries ascribed by the state. Indeed, the two townships I visited have both words in the name of their township: Fengshu Uygur–Muslim Township in Taoyuan County and Xujiaqiao Muslim–Uygur District of Changde Municipality. The respective population size of each group determines the order of the ethnic designations in the place's name. Although, legally, residents cannot be both Uygurs and Muslims, neither outsiders nor locals see much relevance in the distinction.

In what follows, I want to discuss the two seemingly opposite directions Uygurs have taken in adapting to their unique environment. On the one hand, legal status preserves for the locals a sense of ethnicity, despite the fact that people have lost Uygur conventions, religious practices, and even ethnic consciousness. Interviewees generally recognize this loss of Uygur traits. Intermarriage further complicates Uygur blood, rendering Uygur ethnicity increasingly ambiguous. On the other hand, there are attempts to bring Uygur consciousness back, not by reviving lost Uygur clothing, conventions, or religion, but by reading new meanings into dramatically adapted religious behavior and allowing diverse interpretations of "being" Uygur.

One disclaimer before entering the discussion. My argument is that the current theoretical frameworks are not sufficient to account for the hybrid development in Chinese ethnicity. Not that I have a framework that will account for it – the purpose of this chapter is to point out that the anomaly is only a seeming one. Ethnic consciousness, with its multiple directions, be they consistent or not, cannot be treated as if it has shared meaning among alleged members.

Background of Uygur–Muslim townships

I visited both township governments, the ethnic middle school and the ethnic primary school in each township, a mosque in Fengshu, a mosque in Changde which supports mosques in both townships, a villager's house in Fengshu, an ancestor worship ritual in Xujiaqiao, and Changde's Educational Commission. During the visits, I was able to interview a township director, a chair of a township people's congress, school principals, teachers, mosque elders and masters, village council members, peasants, an official of Changde's Bureau of Religion, a former official of religious affairs at Changde's Bureau of United Front, and education officials. Only at the Commission of Education and the Xujiaqiao Township Government had there been a briefing before the interviews started. All other interviews were conducted informally.

I argue in this chapter that the loss of ethnic consciousness in Uygur townships is a result of migration, intermarriage, and historical specificities, and is best indicated by the lack of interest in the religious belief of younger generations. The revival of ethnic consciousness has to do with the resumption of religious activities, broader interpretation of religious belief and practice, and the legality of ethnic status reproduced through policy. Moreover, that Uygurs are able to resume religious activities is a benefit arising from their fusion with Muslims. The loss and the revival of Uygur consciousness are taking place simultaneously.

Few people are aware that there are Uygurs residing in Hunan – all the other Uygurs are in Xinjiang. According to the local account shared among township residents, Uygur ancestors were called by the emperor to the region to quell Miao rebels during the Ming Dynasty and accepted titles from the emperor, who bestowed on them a land where their descendants have continued to live. The title "Grand General of South-Pacifying Post of the Nation" also carries a given Han surname, Jian, which is currently the largest Uygur name-group in Changde. According to an expert on Changde Uygur, who teaches ethnic studies at Jishou Ethnic University in Western Hunan, while Jian is a Uygur name, Huang is the largest Muslim name in Xujiaqiao. However, when I visited a Huang family's graveyard, I saw that a grandmother's surname was Jian, meaning that intermarriage had taken place much earlier (definitely before 1949) than the contemporary Uygurs and Muslims have recognized. The inscription on the gravestone clearly stated that the Huangs were in Xujiaqiao because they were there to quell barbarian rebels. This suggests that both Uygurs and Muslims were in Changde for the same reason. In other words, Uygurs and Muslims share the same historical origin and have mixed their blood. The other, smaller division of Uygur, now with the surname Sai, came from southern Xinjiang in a later period.

I was told that no Uygurs in Changde speak Uygur, although Mosque elders know some Arabic. A few Uygur terms remain in daily use, including those used in greeting, preaching, appreciation, farewell, and calling one to dinner. Uygur

clothing and habits have generally disappeared, though recent years have witnessed the wearing of Uygur hats at Uygur festivals by some. Revival of Uygur ritual is subject to expedient adjustment. During the ancestor worship ceremony I saw, the female descendant from overseas wore a white handkerchief on her head as a substitute for the traditional black cloth.

Eight thousand of the 30,000 residents of Fengshu are either Uygurs or Muslims. In 1986, the government granted the status of ethnic township to Fengshu. The designation "ethnic township" is not the same as "ethnic autonomous township." An autonomous unit must have ethnic leaders while an ethnic unit does not need to, but an ethnic jurisdiction can enjoy all the policy privileges granted to an autonomous jurisdiction. My interviewees reveal that to become an autonomous township is not as good as to become an urban township (*zhen*). *Zhen* residents have government guarantees of housing, schooling, electricity, and even employment, while a village township (*xiang*) has to be responsible for the villagers' own food and housing.

Since becoming an ethnic township, Fengshu's economy has benefited very greatly. Fengshu can anticipate steady annual government investment in its infrastructure. The greatest improvement is in the realm of food crops and cotton. The government decree to use a new variety of rice has paid off. In 1995, rice production was five times that of 1986. As to Uygur-style business such as the raising of beef cattle and poultry, and the production of beef-related manufactured goods, the township government's investment in research and development has made these sectors the key to growth in recent years. The provincial government has selected Fengshu as a trial site for agricultural development. Matching the government funding with local finance, Fengshu invested 100,000 labor units and over 1.3 billion renminbi in total to build irrigation systems. After the flood in 1996, the township government spent about 10 million renminbi to consolidate the dam and left a debt of 2 million renminbi that in 2000 was yet to be repaid. All families run small shops along the main streets, but the major source of income is nonetheless agriculture and pasturage.

The township elementary school in Fengshu was initially a private school during the Qing Dynasty. It was later renamed the "Southern-Pacifying School" by a board which took over the management in 1927. In 1952, the government granted it the status of ethnic school. A middle-school division was added during the Cultural Revolution and it was renamed Fengshu People's Commune Ethnic School in 1983. In 1986, the middle school moved out and the elementary school acquired its current name: Fengshu Uygur–Muslim Central School. At present, the elementary school uses the site that was originally the ancestral hall of the Jians. The school has seventeen classes and one pre-school class; minority ethnic students make up 40 percent of the total of 800 students, and ethnic teachers account for 20 percent.

The interview with the government reveals that its concerns have little to do with Uygur ethnicity. The government cares most about the development of township economics and the maintenance of infrastructure. Specific items the government evaluation teams look at are economic development, road construction,

number of phones, anti-flood work, crop submission, the debt rate, birth control, school enrollment and attendance, the crime rate, and so on. There is no mention of support for ethnic activities at either township or municipal level.

Principal Chen of Xujiaqiao Muslim-Uygur Central School, a Han, told me what the evaluation team wanted to see in her school. The evaluation team looked at teaching, teacher training, the design of the curriculum, and the execution of the design. Since the early 1990s, the Beijing authorities have stressed the importance of quality education in order to reduce the pressure on children to achieve high examination scores. The evaluation team accordingly wants to see if the school has over-emphasized the significance of examination scores. Municipal teams especially want to check the tendency of the township government to overlook everything other than the high-school entrance rate. However, the school understands quality education simply to mean extra-curricular activities, among which Uygur dancing is the only activity with ethnic characteristics.

Reviving Uygur consciousness

In theory, belief in Islam is the common feature shared by Uygurs and Muslims, and the difference between them is one of blood. This is not the reality in Changde. Legend has it that Uygurs came from Southern Xinjiang, while Muslims are children of intermarriage between Han and immigrants from Central Asia, or Arabs. As mentioned earlier, the blood distinction between Uygurs and Muslims is not as clear as is assumed in most ethnic discourse. In fact, imagined blood origin is more important in maintaining Uygur consciousness than Islamic belief is. My interview with a peasant provides a clue. One village in Fengshu has invested in the compilation of a Jian genealogy. This took a few years of research and managed to include those who emigrated overseas, including to Taiwan. Those who donated the most have their pictures printed in the first few pages of the compiled name books.

In each house of the village, on passing through the gate the visitor sees a brown wooden box on a table in front of him or her. Locked in the box are these name books. One might ask why villagers did not begin the collection of names years earlier, since most of the research and printing money came from donations, not from the collective village fund. The reason is that this effort would have been politically very sensitive in earlier years as it could have been interpreted as a sign of feudalism. More important is that the reform and openness policy has paved the way for the revival of ethnic consciousness. In this regard, the granting of ethnic township in 1986 was a stepping stone. External encouragement by visitors of high status was also critical.

This encouragement was never direct, but it was effective anyway. The first high point was the arrival in 1990 of Simayi Aimaiti, a Uygur serving the National Consultative Conference in the capacity of vice-director (*zhuren*). Because of his status, his whereabouts are closely watched by Uygurs in Xinjiang. In fact, Xinjiang Television immediately contacted Fengshu after Simayi's visit and broadcast a number of programs about Changde Uygurs. The programs

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Islamic groups. Mr Ma, a Muslim who serves as chair of the Township People's Congress, gives his impression of these visitors from Xinjiang:

> "We have plenty of contacts with those from Xinjiang. They want to see Uygurs in Hunan. There are about 10,000 in Hunan. Visitors come from the hometown, showing the warmth of a big family. Some in our government, such as a village party secretary and a delegate of a women's association, once went there. They joined the delegation organized by the central government to view the celebration of the thirtieth and fortieth anniversary of Uygur autonomy in Xinjiang. People from Xinjiang are here every year, without fail. They want to see schools most; some want to see villages. The level of education of these visitors varies and their ability to observe is different. Generally speaking, they are more developed than us. Xinjiang is a focus of government policy, enjoying many privileges. Xinjiang is not as backward as Tibet."

Villagers' nostalgia for kinship and keeping their names as treasures, together with the newly established contacts with Xinjiang Uygurs, implies that ethnicity is defined by blood, which ironically is not compatible with the trend of intermarriage between Uygurs and Muslims or Han. The revival of ethnic consciousness is further complicated by the decline of religious rituals. It is Muslims' devotion to Islam that is beginning to help Uygurs regain their religious identity. The Muslims' role in Uygur consciousness is therefore confusing. On the one hand, blood separates Muslims from Uygurs; on the other, intermarriage and Islamic associations bring them closer.

Changing Uygur customs

Changde Uygurs make a distinction between Uygur ethnicity, Islamic belief, and social customs. For Muslims, ethnicity, religion, and custom form a trinity, but for Uygurs they are separate. This means that Uygurs do not have to believe in Islam or live in ways in which Islamic followers typically live. The most troublesome custom to a believer in Islam is probably that many Changde Uygurs eat pork. Older Uygurs may continue to subscribe to Islam and abide by its customs. For Uygur Communist Party members, however, even if they do keep Islamic social customs, they claim that they do not subscribe to Islam, for a Communist Party member should not have any religious beliefs. Younger generations do not have religious belief, nor do they refrain from pork-eating, but they are Uygurs nonetheless.

Needless to say, an Islamic outsider would feel uneasy about pork-eating by a supposedly Islamic community. In fact, even a non-Muslim might feel anxious. For example, a Taiwanese visitor whose father comes from Xujiaqiao and who is not herself Islamic, although her father has always been, was completely overwhelmed by the pork-eating of people in her hometown. A number of children in Fengshu now attend mosque regularly and learn Arabic after school. They appear to be the hope of Islam in the future Uygur community, but many of

them eat pork despite reading the Koran. Mr Ma, a former principal of Fengshu Middle School and a Communist Party member, claims that he has kept all the Uygur customs, but that he is not a believer in Islam. Interestingly, his Uygur customs reflect precisely an Islamic lifestyle. He has an explanation for all the seeming anomalies:

> "Among students, fewer than fifteen students still keep real Uygur customs and I respect their practices. Since we have had mosques in the village, more attention has been paid to Uygur customs. I cannot guarantee that all these fifteen students will continue their customs after entering the high school. Reading of the Koran and eating pork are two separate issues. The rules are changing these days. For example, if you have not eaten pork for a week before your parents die, you can still go see them. New rules give pork-eating a new excuse. In any case, their ethnic Uygur status does not change. The key to ethnic status is not about pork-eating. Religious belief and customs are not one thing. I do not understand Islam, but I would never eat pork. That is the custom to which I subscribe."

A senior master of Changde Mosque similarly feels that he can do nothing about pork-eating. He can only express his understanding of the situation. He has a political, historical explanation that should presumably make Islamic believers elsewhere feel better:

> We do not force anyone into certain customs. We cannot change people's ethnic status just because they have changed their customs. We do not want to see Muslims eat pork, but there are two political reasons for this. One is that the Kuomintang once put disease germs in beef and many people in Changde ate it. This experience forced many to change their customs. The second is that there was once a campaign to use artificial fuel, and pig excrement was included in it. After a while, people began to change their customs.

Accordingly, there are political reasons why Fengshu Uygurs eat pork. To attract more disciples to Islam, one would have to interpret the Koran broadly to accept a pork-eating population. According to an elder of the local mosque, true believers consider all food to belong to Allah. Only mosque masters can kill living creatures for food because they know how to pray for the permission of Allah and how to kill them in a hygienic way. No Ahong or mosque master would kill swine, though. The strategy is to preach the Koran as widely as possible to bring villagers back to the mosque. Once they accept the religion, they will change their custom. The master said, "As long as they stop eating pork in the future, we welcome them back wholeheartedly."

In addition to pork-eating, there is also the issue of pig-breeding. In most Islamic areas, pasturage is mainly of goats and cattle; encountering pig-breeding suggests that one has run across a Han family. That is not so in Changde.

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> "We start from a young age and will send them to advanced study eventually. When they return, they will become members of the mosque commission. When we teach the Koran, we first speak of how to be a good person. We also ask students to translate the Koran into Han characters. This is hard work for them. We began this requirement only very recently, for if they read the translated text prepared for them, they would not memorize well. If they themselves do the whole translation, they can memorize well. We are all part-time in the mosque, but my family is a family of Ahongs. I myself learned the Koran in this mosque. We do not compel people into Islam, especially not children."

While the tolerant political atmosphere is conducive to the revival of Islamic activities, religious activities may have political implications. Generally speaking, the government wants to separate religion from politics. In the early 1980s, few people believed the change of religious policy had actually occurred. Later, when they felt more certain, many more began to attend Friday sessions. On average, more than sixty people attend every week. Special events may draw over 700 believers to the mosque. Master Ma comments that this phenomenon "reflects the state of mind of average people who understand that religion makes them noble people and enhances intimacy between people." Older believers stay home for physical reasons, but they can conduct the ritual five times a day, as in the mosque, and this requires only a blanket on the floor.

The Ancient Mosque cooperates closely with the government. The Hunan provincial government was able to apply for a loan from Arab banks through the mosque connection and establish an Arabic school. The government has never financed the mosque, though Mr Jian from Changde's Bureau of Religion confirms that the government would like to see the mosque built higher and growing faster. Mr Jian explains that the relationship between the government and the mosque is threefold. First, the government must protect the interests of the mosque. Second, it needs help from the mosque in promoting its policies. And, third, it helps the mosque to cleanse evil religious activities in order to guarantee the normal operation of the mosque. As to the management of the mosque, the government leaves the work entirely to the mosque commission, unless the mosque personnel specifically request the government to intervene. In Changde, a Christian church did once make such a request, but never a mosque.

Master Ma concurs. His mosque would combine preaching with the promulgation of policy. The mosque commission meets every week. One major function is "to learn the policy principles of the Party and the government" in addition to discussion of daily management. The Bureau of Religion is concerned with the fund-raising ability of the mosque and encourages the mosque to run businesses. The Ancient Mosque plans "to ride on the east wind to make some profit" and at the same time get help from Huaishen Mosque in Canton through an earlier connection. The potential for political repression of mosque activities would drop greatly if business made up much of the mosque activities, but their actual influence may increase. This latter possibility has political implications.

The mosque is currently preoccupied with fund-raising. The plan is to open an Islamic restaurant. At present the revenue is about 10,000 renminbi a year, and it comes from only a few days' work during festivals. Once the restaurant is run on a regular basis, the income is expected to increase dramatically. Other sources of income include rentals from a few houses that the mosque owns in the cities. Regarding expenses, the mosque needs to train Ahong and support Ahong in places such as Fengshu and Xujiaqiao. There are contacts with Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, the United States, and Japan in order to create more opportunities for advanced studies for students. This transnational network necessarily has political implications.

Being conscious of politics, Master Jian cautiously handles the teaching in the mosque to make sure that the mosque's activities do not step into the realm of politics. He believes that the relations between the mosque and the government are critical to the revival of Islam. At the age of 83, his way is to stress virtue and thought in the teaching:

> "We will breed newcomers under the Party leadership and make them love the motherland, love the people, and love peace. We teach them to have visions, virtues, and education. They must work physically. Even Zhuge Wuhou worked in the fields.[3] They must learn from him. Our religion, under the protection of the Communist Party, is now enjoying equality and freedom. We have not only equality, but also special treatment when we Uygurs look for jobs and schooling. We even receive higher pay sometimes. We teach students to be disciplined, to learn knowledge, and to behave in a serious manner. They must give happily. To give is a priceless treasure of the spirit. . . . If we have extra money, we will open more schools and help more poor people. We must be loyal and faithful to Allah and the central government, and practice filial piety to our parents. . . . I do not read Arabic, but I believe in Islam's selfless spirit."

Conclusion

It is strange to learn that there are Uygurs who eat pork. Migration, intermarriage, and former political factors partly explain why. The meaning of this change of custom varies according to one's perspective. For Uygurs in southern Xinjiang, the encounter is full of surprise and sympathy, although a sense of loss is recorded in the recognition that Uygur traits have fallen into disuse in Changde. For the Party and the government, customs are not the same as ethnicity and people must be kept free to adopt whatever customs they choose. For believers in Islam, this is not good news, but there is no alternative but to work harder, little by little, on the younger generations. Some Changde Uygurs are involved in the quest for Uygur characteristics, while others pay no attention to these. These two kinds of people naturally bring different attitudes to the revival of religious activities. Older people feel that their religion is the base for developing ethnic consciousness, while the government conceives of them as mechanisms by which

to win loyalty and promote policy. For children attending lessons in the mosque, Islamic activities open new career possibilities.

Changde Uygurs' pork-eating is the beginning of future development as well as a product of past history. There are multiple forces slowing this development. Inconsistencies may exist in certain situations, but not always or necessarily so. One of the forces is intermarriage with Muslims, which may obscure Uygur identity. Uygur consciousness gains by having more access to Islamic rituals, which Muslims have preserved better than the Uygurs have. Market forces distract potential Uygur believers, but now may contribute to the strength of the Ancient Mosque. Politics prevents leading cadres from joining mosque activities and reduces the attractiveness of Islam to average villagers, but politics is also the force that has enabled Uygurs to keep their ethnic status and focused outside attention to Changde, which proved to be crucial to the revival of local ethnic consciousness. While the question of how many Uygurs in Changde will continue pork-eating may be an exotic topic for visitors, it will be an indicator of the direction taken by Uygur consciousness. Equally, the number of Ahongs in Changde in the future will show whether believers have grown in number as well as in economic strength. More important to scholars is whether this growth suggests mutually helpful or destructive relations between religion and the market. At that time, we will perhaps be in a slightly better position to judge whether the distinction made by Changde Uygurs between ethnicity, religion, and customs is a historical coincidence or an inevitability.

9 Muslims between mosque and state in Litong, Yingchuan

Minorities' loyalty to the state

For a modern sovereign state, one major goal of civic education regarding ethnic minorities is to transfer their loyalty from their individual ethnic groups to an abstract all-encompassing state. For the Chinese state, there was no such civic education before its establishment in 1911. "Minority" was not a concept and loyalty was a non-issue. There were aliens, not minorities. Facing aliens, the Chinese dynastic court was mainly concerned with the system of "propriety," or proper relationship between the court and the aliens, with the former possessing an image of superiority. To achieve minimal respect from aliens, the court resorted to various techniques such as assimilation, separation, suppression, expulsion, annihilation, placation, and bestowal. The choice of technique was merely a matter of capability. Emperors never worried about losing the loyalty of the court officials, even if sanctions failed to bring the aliens back to the system of propriety.

There has been no emperor since 1911. Replacing the ruler are sovereign borders, inside which all citizens should be equal among themselves and loyal to the state regardless of their ethnicity. In reality, efforts to mobilize citizen loyalty have continued ever since, achieving different degrees of success, depending on the target of the effort. To assure the loyalty of ethnic people towards the state, civic education must first individualize ethnic identities so as to render them irrelevant to citizens' participation in state affairs. Ethnic citizens therefore receive privileges, exemptions, and promotion from the state individually, and join in state affairs in the form of paying tax, signing contracts, attending schools, electing officials, and so on, as single, separate, free participants. This is not to deny ethnic identities but to create a shared state identity at a more abstract level.[1] Unlike the emperor, who could simply perceive as unworthy those aliens who denied themselves the honor of joining the system of propriety, the state cannot afford to lose citizen identification while still pretending to maintain sovereignty within its borders.

The march of history from the age of the emperor to the age of the state was not spontaneous for most Chinese. Neither revolutionary leaders nor citizens of the new state understood the meaning of becoming citizens. The question of how to reconcile state identity and ethnic identity has concerned all national leaders since the beginning of the twentieth century.[2] This is a situation different from

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individualize Muslim citizens through policy privileges so as to distract them from too fierce an adherence to a Muslim identity. On the other hand, the state wants to maintain "Muslim" as a category of identity so that it retains a target for its "civilizing" projects. It turns out that in the field of market and state activities, the state is effective in occupying the agenda of all ethnic groups in secular affairs such as economic production, ideological indoctrination, and political organization. Outside the market and state, ethnic groups are free to keep those characteristics that are most expressive of their ethnicity. For those who have little uniqueness in religious identity, ethnicity is tantamount to anything from the use of an ethnic language to a mere style of dress. In comparison, with their unique religious identity as devotees of Islam, Muslims may undermine "civilizing" projects of the state without even intending to do so.

The state must respect the Muslims' unique religion to avoid overt conflict between state identity and ethnic identity, yet the state in China has no liberal basis from which to individualize Muslim citizens under civic nationalism. In fact, under the pre-reform Communist rule between 1949 and 1979, the state was opposed to liberalism. Without the support of liberalism, the state had to intervene in religious affairs to make sure that ethnic identities bred there did not threaten state authority. How a Muslim interacts with the state is thus contingent on the time, type of issue (e.g. economics, religion, or social custom), and personality involved. As a result, a Muslim in China is neither simply alien, as before 1911, nor entirely in accord with civic nationalism, as in the United States, nor collectively socialistic, as before 1979. Perhaps a little of all of those characteristics, mixed together in different proportions, exist in different neighborhoods.

The ensuing discussion is based on interviews conducted in fall 1998 in Ningxia Autonomous District. Interviewees include officials of civic affairs in Yinchuan, the capital of Ningxia, and Litong, a city 16 kilometers south of Yinchuan. Interviews in Litong included officials of the Bureau of Education and the Bureau of Religion. In Litong, officials arranged visits to four villages (Zaoyuan Village in Zaoyuan Township, Wuxing Village in Gucheng Township, and Huasi Village and Jeifang Village in Shangqiao Township), two schools (First Primary School in Biandanyi Village and Shuangjigou Junior School in Shuangjigou Village), two enterprises (Saicheng Drinks and Minle Muslim Milk), and two Muslim mosques (Nanguan mosque in Yinchuan and the village mosque in Ninujiafang Village). All interviews were collective interviews taking from one to three hours. All except two interviewees were Muslim.

Religious identity

Religious identity in Muslim areas has always been strong. During the Cultural Revolution, revolutionaries denounced religious rituals and did great damage to mosques.[4] Religious activities have resumed since 1978. With the development of economics, peasants in all villages began to donate money to building mosques. In Litong, all villages nearby have had their own mosques. Deputy Director Ma of Litong's Office of Civil Affairs calls himself an "illiterate Muslim" because he

was unable to go to the mosque during the Cultural Revolution and still cannot read the Koran. The economy took off in the mid-1990s, and more mosques have been built since then. In the villages visited, Jiefang and Huasi each have four, while Wuxing has three. Even Zaoyuan, where Muslims account for only 30 percent of the village population, has one mosque.

The rise of mosque culture is only partly explained by economics; the loosening of the political atmosphere also contributes. Of more recent importance is the competition between different religious sects. Before Litong became a city in 1998, there were only two sects. There are four today. In spite of the competition, there is no real conflict among these sects. Their differences are mainly in the style of praying, over which family and community traditions have definite influences. Typically, one's neighborhood determines one's membership in a sect.[3] Muslim rituals are complicated and detailed, and are discussed in many books and articles. It is still interesting to report how eager Muslims themselves are to explain their religious customs to visitors, purely to give an impression of the seriousness of their religious identities. The act of explicating to visitors reflects, as well as reproduces, the simplicity and security of their religious identity.

All sects in the interviewed areas require their disciples to pray to Allah five times a day. According to Chief Ma from Ningxia's Office of Civil Affairs, the motive for praying may vary according to the sect, but the prayers' sincerity and ritual procedures are identical:

> "Peasants in the mountains separate so that different sects can have different mosques. They may be related, but their religious sects are mutually isolated. This differentiation of sects is, in my opinion, a matter of economic interest. The Koran, their holy book, and their rituals are almost the same; they all pray facing the west [i.e. towards Mecca]. The time of praying cannot be fixed, though, because each village has its own geography, its own determination of the time of sunrise and moonrise, and its own prayer agenda. [During Ramadan] they must finish breakfast before sunrise and resume eating only after seeing the stars shining. . . . Before each prayer, one must bathe, and there are the great baths and the lesser baths. To take a lesser bath, one washes the elbows and lower arms. Each mosque has a bathhouse. When bathing, one should pour water out of a utensil and should not wash in the utensil (to keep unclean water out of the utensil). . . . Muslim men can marry Han women, but Muslim women cannot marry into Han families. Muslims can assimilate Han women through marriage into their families, but Muslim women cannot be assimilated into Han women in Han families. . . . Typically an Ahong is called to kill sheep. Ahongs must bring the Koran and water. In the desert, Ahongs can use sand as a substitute for water. After praying, one bathes again before returning to work. The head priest in each mosque is appointed by the Mosque Commission of each mosque. Only the highest priest can administer the learning sessions [*kaixue*] in the mosque. If other mosques have no more openings in their mosques for the priests 'with clothes' [*chuan yi*, meaning with qualification],

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> of Hajj and become more sincere and more faithful to Allah. It's like once you graduate from school, you should study even harder. All Hajjes must pray five times a day. . . . If there were no Allah, there would be nothing left. The food we eat is Allah's mercy. If we make money, we will express gratitude to Allah and donate more. All this is about faith. Han people say all comes from heaven. We Muslims say all is the bestowal of Allah. During the Iran–Iraq war, both sides put their guns down to pray when the time arrived. If you cannot find a mosque nearby, you should pray at home."

Every Friday is the day of Zhuma and the chief Ahong preaches the Koran in the mosque to the praying villagers. In the past, villagers would send children to the mosque to learn the Koran and relieve the parents of the burden of feeding them, though this went against state policy. The state wanted children to be in school. After birth control was enforced, to avoid starvation, children no longer went to the mosque. In fact, more and more Ahongs now come from Ningxia Scripture College. According to Deputy Chief Wang from Ningxia Civil Affairs, graduates from the scripture school can serve as Ahongs. They are actually better preachers than the old-fashioned Ahongs. This is because they must learn philosophy and political economy in college and are able to speak from a knowledge of social realities. Praising young Ahongs for combining religion and science, Deputy Director Ma is simultaneously critical of old-fashioned Ahongs because of their proclivity to superstition.

Prayers on the day of Zhuma are made primarily by older villagers. Muslims in Litong generally begin to pay attention to mosque activities on the day of Zhuma after the age of 40. The older one grows, the more motivated one is to go to Mecca. Speaking from his work experience, Secretary Ma of the Huasi Party division has to resolve the problem of too many wanting to go. He always arranges for the elderly to go first. People's Deputy Ma of Shangqiao Township adds that there are female Ahongs now. Most of them learn the Koran at home. For those of the younger generations who seem to have been distracted from their religious identities, Ms Ma is confident that they will come back at an older age. She does not worry that younger generations do not know how to pray, because they nonetheless celebrate two festivals each year and will learn how to pray as time goes on. Concerning those who have come back from Mecca, Director Qiao of Shangqiao Township notes that they can no longer work once they become a Hajj. The only thing they do is pray and prepare to pray in the mosque five times a day.

The religious identities of Muslims have a much longer history than the state and will not disappear; in contrast, the mobilization of the state for the enforcement of loyalty and the imposition of the market economy are very recent phenomena. While Muslim villagers must adapt to the demands of the state, there is nevertheless an intriguing symbiosis between their Muslim identities and the state and market. Muslim identity does not depend on the state to continue, but does have to take account of the conditions the state provides. Muslims have to adapt to and abide by state regulation and market inducement, but they can also use resources available in the state and the market to enrich their religious activities.

How Muslims in Litong acquire the trust of the state, make the state and the market contribute to their extant ethnic identities, and willingly introduce modern elements into their identities are the subjects of the following sections.

Party leadership

The Communist Party understands the importance of religious identity to Muslims. Its Muslim policy therefore claims to respect religious freedom. However, religious identities cross sovereign borders and may not always be conducive to the establishment of a solid state identity. The Party therefore finds itself torn between allowing religious identities and promoting state identity. It turns out that it expresses its religions policy negatively. On the one hand, there is the warning that religious establishments should not interfere in politics. On the other, there is the instruction that the Party be kept free from religious activities. An incident early in the Republican period suggests that one should be very cautious in dealing with the Muslim population. Because the KMT leadership once remarked that being a Muslim was just a matter of religion, not ethnicity, and also because later the number of seats preserved for Muslim representatives was lower than expected, Muslims organized themselves and demonstrated outside the National Assembly. The incident painted the KMT government in a very bad light back then.[6]

Everyone repeats the Party line that politics and religion should not interfere in each other's business. To assure their loyalty to the state, the Party demands that all Ahongs go to the Township Bureau of Religion every month to learn the recent policies. On the other hand, Party and government cadres should not try to manage religious business directly. All religious business should be handled by the mosque commission of each mosque. The Party and the government apparently worry more about Muslims' interference in politics than about their business activities. Deputy Director Ma reflects from his own Muslim perspective and acknowledges that "once religious forces enter politics, troubles follow and ordinary people face difficult problems." He opposes the Ahongs' participation in politics and says, "This is our Party's policy." From the Muslim perspective, Ma believes, religion as a belief is not appropriate in the management of state affairs and "in ordinary people's eyes, Ahongs should be men of virtue and knowledge, with a beard, who are called old mister even in their twenties, and could not be good Ahongs if involved in politics."

In practice, the cadres I interviewed each came up with illustrations of how Muslims and Han are indistinguishable in politics. According to Deputy Township Director Ma of Shangqiao Township, for example, many Muslims are elected village directors in villages where the Han are in the majority, and vice versa. "We don't make distinctions," he said. According to Secretary You of Zaoyuan Village, You has fifty-three Party members in the village and Han and Muslim membership is about the same. Director He, responsible for civil affairs in Gucheng Township, stresses that all Party members have "freedom of religion." If a Muslim becomes village director, however, the time left to him or her for

religious activities necessarily shrinks. A production team leader, in his sixties, explains that "the most important thing is to do the work of the village team; to go to the mosque is only the second important thing." Moreover, religion-related teaching is no longer included in school education. In the past, primary schools could teach Arabic, but this is no longer the case, according to People's Deputy Ma of Shangqiao Township. Anyone dedicated to learning the Koran should go to the mosque "after school."

A number of cadres whom I interviewed reiterated the instruction that polities should not interfere in religion.[7] According to Township Director Qiao, as to the building of mosques, "the fund-raising is totally handled by ordinary people. The government does not step in at all to avoid the extremely high sensitivity of the issue." In her discussion, Director of Education Ma of Litong spoke emphatically of the same level of sensitivity regarding Muslim education: "Religion? We don't touch; no, no touch, no touch at all." She said there was absolutely no difference between Han and Muslims in the school texts used and repeated that Muslims and Han were very much united. The government has no intention of teaching children what it means to be a Muslim. Moreover, it often happens that the government has to give in to show respect to religion. Deputy Director Ma had the following three cases in mind.

On one occasion the government decided to circumvent a head priest's ancestors' graveyard while building a new paved road, and this cost it an extra 250,000 renminbi. In the second case, a mosque built beside a government building was much taller and eventually forced the government out of that building. The rationale is that "The Party must concede at certain times and places and to certain ethnic people," to show that the Party cares about "ethnic peoples' emotional reaction." This particular case resulted in contrasting opinions. Secretary Yang of Gucheng Township believed that the Party should not allow the masses to develop their wishes at will. Director Mai of Wuxing Village similarly feels that "The problem today is that there is too much freedom." The third case concerns an internal report on Muslim social practices which pointed out that "the practice of in-group marriage lowers the intelligence of the Muslim population and is responsible for the increase in the number of Muslim families below the poverty line." The report was not approved precisely because its contents could have led to protest by Muslims. Whether or not the report contained an element of discrimination is no longer relevant, according to Wuxing Village Director Mai and Secretary Yu, because the execution of the marriage law and birth control policy is all-important.

Although the Party consciously avoids interfering in religious affairs, it does not give away opportunities to use religion for the promotion of policy. This is because "for Muslim people, religion is supreme and the Ahongs' words are like the emperors' instruction," as Deputy Chief Wang from the Office of Civil Affairs at Ningxia puts it. This is one of the reasons that both people's congresses and political consultative conferences must recruit Ahongs in order to be legitimate to Muslim people. To rely on Ahongs for policy promotion requires the government to support religion and guarantee freedom of religion in the

first place. Chief Ma from Ningxia Civil Affairs confirms that the government always approves applications for building new mosques – as long as the township has the land available. Furthermore, the government helps to manage Muslim restaurants by requiring that all chefs be Muslims and specifying that the owners of the restaurants, who are sometimes Han, are not allowed to intervene in the purchase and cooking of food. All this is said to embody the policy that all religion-related activities take place "within the scope of the constitution, the law and religious teaching."

The Party's and the government's support of religious activities provides a solid base for using them for policy promotion. The government's Ethnic Commission (*minzu weiyuanhui*) regularly arranges for Ahongs to take educational trips outside their regions. Since the Association of Muslims is too loose to organize travel, the Party is always behind this type of government-sponsored trip. All major mosques have Party members and people's deputies, but their activities in the mosques are rarely political. The Bureau of Religion is most aggressive in holding policy sessions for Ahongs. Township People's Deputy Ma describes what the Bureau calls the three-fix session:

> "Ahongs must develop their religious activities under the leadership of the Party and the government. Each month, Ahongs in the township are summoned to the township government to learn the policy guidelines of the Party. They go there out of their own conscience and willingly. You don't need to push them. This is the so-called three-fix [i.e. *sanding*] session: fixed time, fixed place, and fixed contents. The mosque commission of each mosque sometimes join, too. We have a total of thirty-four mosques in our township. If the head priest goes, then the Hajj may not go. If an Ahong is a Hajj, he always goes."

Mr. Jin from the Bureau of Religion of Shangqiao Township adds:

> "Each mosque commission is composed of three to nine members, always an odd number. The township will call the Bureau of Religion and ask them to go there and conduct a session. Two hours per session. We finish around 11 in the morning; sometimes the session lasts until 12 P.M. We appoint Ahongs to be our policy promoters. Ahongs use the Koran to explain the government's current policy. The superior government sends us relevant documents. We stress inter-ethnic unity and interact with each other frequently."

Secretary Li of Nioujiafang Village, while showing visitors the mosque in his village, stated that an Ahong should promote national unity on the day of Zhuma, and instruct his listeners to accumulate virtue and good deeds. Policies that Ahongs help most effectively with are birth control and the fight against narcotics. Secretary Ma of Huasi Village told visitors that Muslims' five big detrimental activities or substances are tobacco, gambling, alcohol, prostitution, and narcotics. Moreover, village directors may not be able to convince villagers to accept birth control, but if Ahongs promote the policy, it prevails easily. Director Mai of Wuxing Village

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so they begin to go to mosque after reaching their forties, save money to build their own mosque, and prepare to go to Mecca. Director of Education Ma estimates that there are over 200 mosques in the Litong area while there are only a little over a hundred primary schools. In brief, the Party and state are successful in individualizing and legalizing Muslims in the state arena because they allow Muslims some room to preserve their identities outside the state. The Party is willing to turn a blind eye when identity becomes an issue in the Litong areas, as long as local people comply with what the Party and state expect of them. From the local perspective, this space for identity activities makes the Party and state acceptable.

The market economy

Muslim identities should matter little in the market, which recognizes only economic values and efficiency. Litong is one of the better-off Muslim areas in China. Director Yang of Civil Affairs in Litong points to the traditional Muslim fondness for beef and lamb as an explanation for the popularity of milk-manufacturing in the area. Other popular businesses include paper-making, construction, and the manufacture of wooden plates. Han peasants in the area additionally include pigs among their farm animals. Eighty percent of the businesses are owned by local people, and little investment comes from outside the region. Machines needed for manufacturing are imported from other parts of the country. Secretary You of Zaoyuan Village describes the style of business in his village as "self-investment based upon our own investigation of the market."

Besides their regular allowance, village directors and village Party secretaries receive the largest share of bonuses from the collective investment of the villages, the exact amount of which depends on the revenue for the year. This is true in all four of the villages I visited. In Wuxing Village, for example, six village cadres, including the director and secretary, shared a bonus of 20,000 renminbi in 1997. In Huasi Village, to take another example, the director and secretary together collect half of the bonus, which was 5500 renminbi per person in 1997.

Except for Zaoyung Village, where the economy was slow in 1997, all the other three villages I visited are suburban villages of small per capita acreage. These suburban villages take advantage of their proximity to the city. Secretary Yang of Gucheng Township reported that the director of Wuxing Village was ousted by villagers last year because of his poor management of the village's finances. For a similar reason, the last election for the post of director in Zaoyuan Village voted out the incumbent. According to Deputy Director Yang of Civil Affairs in Litong, when the city government evaluates the performance of a village, economic revenue is among the most important indicators. Secretary Wang of Shangqiao Township mentioned civil reconciliation as among the most time-consuming work. Issues involved in civil reconciliation are related to economics nonetheless, such as land distribution and use, the management of productive work, and so on. No direct evidence suggests that Muslim identity and the market economy are in any way incompatible. The only inference is that market activities take away time for religious activities.

Secretary You of Zaoyuan, for example, does not even have time for farming, which he leaves for his children and wife to do, not to mention attending religious sessions in the mosque. Workers have no time either, and construction workers are especially disadvantaged in terms of their religious devotion since they cannot afford the physically demanding ritual of fasting during the day in Ramadan. The general manager of Minle Muslim Milk goes to the mosque regularly, but his wish to go to Mecca is unlikely to come true because "he cannot leave the factory for too long as the trip to Mecca takes a minimum of forty days." He never encourages his young workers to go to the mosque. Many who do business have to travel and are naturally alienated from the five-times-a-day prayer ritual. Secretary Ma acknowledges that he personally takes a liberal approach to all of this. When young men do go to the mosque on the day of Zhuma, Deputy Director Ma of Litong believes that it must be because their parents make them go.

There are, nonetheless, implicit Muslim traces in the market. For example, 90 percent of the workers at Saishang Drinks are Muslim; the same is true at Minle Muslim Milk. The associate general manager at Saishang is Han, as is the sales manager, but the production manager is Muslim. This cannot be just a coincidence in Litong, where Han make up 70 percent of the total population. Deputy Director Yang believes that this has to do with Muslims' traditional concern for hygiene, which is a particularly appropriate trait for the food and drink industry. In addition, Muslim workers will introduce new Muslim workers when there are openings in the factory, and Muslim managers have an easier time managing them. This is the case also for construction companies. Finally, since farm animals such as cows and sheep make up the traditional Muslim diet, milk-manufacturing is an obvious source of employment for workers in Muslim farming villages.

The rise of the market economy influences the education policy. Director Ma of Education has made enormous efforts to promote occupational education in recent years with the hope of helping those who failed their entrance examinations. Her most important policy goal is to have them become useful workers in Muslim villages:

> "I started a new division in the second year of the junior high. If students decide that they will not take the entrance examination, I will provide them with an additional year of training in our occupational classes to learn bicycle and motorcycle repair or the skill necessary for them to go home and cultivate the land. Many students are tired of learning. Their parents want them to take the entrance examination against their own will. After my training, some students are able to open their own shops in just a few years, and can make a living for themselves. . . . I have been promoting the slogan 'loving peasants, loving agriculture' in order to persuade students to devote themselves to village development. I try to convey my idea to school principals, encouraging them to recognize the fact that we are in an agricultural area. I did a survey and found that 97 percent of students in elementary and junior high schools wanted to 'jump out of the agricultural gate' [i.e. escape

> from agriculture]. But they are unable to. I realize that principals have second thoughts. I want to raise the level of their thinking to my level. This is China. You cannot give away the virtue of labor. The old way of thinking is to study and to be an official, but how many can become officials? Most of us are common people . . . you do not get to choose your own occupation."

Although Director Ma did not mention Muslims in her vision, her thinking is along ethnic lines nonetheless, because she wants students to stay home and contribute to the local economy. This devotion to the local economy cannot be successful if she considers it irrelevant to Muslim identity. It is true that occupational training applies to both Muslims and Han, but in order to persuade students to stay, officials must at the same time provide them with a motive over and above anything that can be found in occupational training alone. Education may create more Muslim human capital, but it cannot guarantee that the capital will be useful to the development of Muslim areas. To stress economics exclusively contradicts the goal of having students stay. Therefore it is inevitable that the director of education must rely on Muslim identity to motivate them to stay. This identity depends on religious activities seemingly outside the market arena. The stress on the similarity between Han and Muslim in terms of textbooks or years of education will not be helpful in this regard. This explains why Director Ma's goal is not appreciated by school principals, whose performance is conventionally evaluated against purely educational criteria.

Muslims as Han

Muslim villages have plenty of room to engage in activities outside the state and market arenas. So too do Han villages. Except for the religious activities that separate Muslim from Han, they share many common features, including a political culture that emphasizes collectivism and rule by human beings rather than a deity, despite the installation of civic programs such as village autonomy throughout the country. The village autonomy system has a format similar to that of Western civic culture, emphasizing democratic election for village cadres, democratic policy-making, democratic control of policy implementation, and democratic management of village affairs. In theory, village affairs should be openly discussed and should abide by a village compact detailing the procedures of policy-making and implementation agreed on by all villagers. Villagers, instead of government officials, are responsible for executing state policy.[8]

In reality, however, village autonomy reveals strong collectivism – although they have individual votes, people shy away from expressing individual viewpoints. There is no felt need to restrain the government from abusing power since in China the government is never seen as a necessary evil. The function of village autonomy is to assist the government in improving policy techniques – a dramatically different function from that in a liberal democracy.[9] Villagers look to the man of virtue in their village. In fact, people select this man collectively:

it is always assumed that candidates, with the support of the Party, the family, and the elderly, are men of virtue. The process of producing candidates involves most villagers, so it is collective in a sense. Important policy should be discussed at a villagers' meeting, and therefore it too is collective. Villagers are equal in their share of both collective property and obligatory work. To different degrees, villages own businesses and land collectively. The township Party office is responsible for preparing future cadres in subordinate villages. Many villages still cherish the growth of collective property more than individual profit-making possibilities. All sorts of political mobilization along kinship lines dominate electoral politics in the villages. Village enterprise managers do not trust market mechanisms but rather their own social networking to gain business opportunities. Muslims in Litong appear to share all these characteristics.

The "strongman complex"

Village autonomy in Muslim villages has yet to change villagers' reliance on the Party to determine the direction of village development. It is typical that the Party as well as the villagers want to have a capable director who knows how to make money for everyone. This quest for capable directors in China is known as the "strongman complex" – something very similar to the "rule of man." The growth of a strongman can always be traced back to the Party, which selects potential leaders at a young age and prepares them progressively by giving them a series of official positions. Referring to the drafting of the village compact and the preparation of the list of candidates for village council members, Secretary Yang of Gucheng Township concludes that "the Party is crucial in many respects." His colleague Ms He, director of civil affairs of Gucheng Township, adds that if the mass organizations have no candidate of their own, then there will be only one candidate. However, Deputy Director Yang of Gucheng Township estimates that at the previous election, 30 percent of elected officials did not even appear on the ballot.[10] This implies that the Party's choice is not always the result of widespread consultation. Both Secretary You and Director He reiterate the norm of thorough consultation, for this is the essence of "democratic centralism." Promotion of a candidate should start only after the process of consultation indicates universal support.

Cases show that the Party puts great effort into preparing its own candidates. Candidates do not show up randomly, but are those who had done well in previous posts and were spotted by the Party. All cadres have a proud history. Secretary Yang of Gucheng Township had been a vice-secretary before and was the head of the militia and division secretary of the Communist Youth Corps further back. Secretary Li of Jiefang Village had been a village director earlier, and he held that position after he had served as the head of the militia for nineteen years. Secretary You of Zaoyuan Village, who came from the township Party division, was appointed by the township government to take over the village when the previous director was ousted. Director Mai of Wuxing Village was also the head of the militia. Secretary Yu was first the head of Communist Youth

Corps, then vice-secretary. The most competitive election occurred in Jiefang Village during the previous election, with the Party's candidate winning by only twenty-two votes. Township People's Deputy Ma recalled with relief that if the opponent had won, "we would have had a big problem executing government policy." Deputy Director Ma of Litong Civil Affairs concludes:

> "Villagers all showed up during the election. They would feel bad if they didn't. . . . Villages of average economic development are all right. For a rich village, people want to find a fair leader, and then the election is difficult. People are intense during the election. We cannot allow the bad guy to win. We cannot allow the incompetent to win, either. Village cadres must call on the superior cadres to let them know who they should be watching carefully. Everybody cares about the election. Everybody participates. Then the village affairs are opened up. One night during the last election, we went around a number of villages and did not not get back until midnight. We must let people know our expectations."

Collectivism

The strength of collectivism in a village's political culture is partly determined by the strength of its collective economy. A fragile collective economy may experience difficulties executing government policy.[11] On the other hand, loose collective culture hinders the development of village economy. This is because road-building, bridge maintenance, school education, and so on all depend on collective effort. Besides collective economic strength, weak village leadership has more to do with lack of esteem for the village director and the Party secretary than with inadequate Party organization. Again, social esteem of those leading cadres is tied into their ability to develop the collective economy. Leaders that have high esteem can mobilize villagers for collective work. In brief, collectivism and the success of village autonomy are two sides of one coin.

Villages in Litong testify to this intriguing relationship between collectivism and economic development, which is often found in Han villages. For example, in all the villages I visited, the collective economy helps to pay all those head-count fees imposed on villages by the township government, such as the water fee, road fee, obligation work exemption fee, and other levies, with the single exception of the education fee. It is believed that paying education fees can enhance villagers' concern with education. Villagers use profits from collective property to buy machinery, dig wells, or repair roads. They also invest in hotels and restaurants. Village councils are especially attentive to the sourcing and sale of businesses in their villages, whether these are collective or private. All the budgets and accounting of the village councils must be made public on the wall of the village office. Purchases over a certain amount require the approval of the village assembly. Deputy Director Yang especially praises Zaoyuan Village Council for wisely introducing covers to protect plants in winter. All village councils help village schools with repair and maintenance. Secretary Yang believes

that it is the collective economy that resolves the problem of uneven income distribution:

> "After 1978, the massive collective cropland was dissolved. Everything belonged to individual peasant households. They cultivated their own land and made their own money separately. The income lag between the poor and the rich was getting wider. To resolve this problem, we decided to reform the organization [meaning village council and Party] that lent funds to develop the collective economy. We have been growing at the rate of 20 percent annually. Our collective assets now include real estate, various enterprises, and office buildings."

In a private business such as Saicheng Drinks, the collectivist outlook is still traceable. For example, although each salesperson is responsible for a specific region and their pay is contingent on their sales record, the method of payment is changed whenever the sales in a particular region drop. Anticipating the cries for fairer treatment, the company will rearrange the payment schedule as well as redividing the sales regions. Market performance does not really guide policy, as the payment design would suggest. For Minle Muslim Milk, family collectivism is clear, for children and in-laws take all major positions in the company. The general manager was a construction worker when he first started private business. Back then, all his construction workers were already his relatives. He trusts no outsider. His business style reveals an interesting conception of the market. He never allows himself to owe money to anyone he does business with the first time, but once a friendship is established, he never pays on time. In contrast, controllers in the accounts payable culture in the United States, for example, rarely distinguish between first-time customers and long-time patrons. They always delay the payments.

Another reference to collectivism similarly extant in most Han villages is the establishment of a village dossier. Secretary You explains that these dossiers "record family situations." Showing an attitude completely opposite to that found in a liberal democracy, villagers generally consider the keeping of these dossiers essential to effective village autonomy and democracy. According to the records in the dossiers, each household is evaluated at the end of each season or year. This process strengthens villagers' sense of belonging. Villagers are required to evaluate themselves as well as one another. Villagers receiving a good evaluation can expect material reward. Cadres should also be evaluated. The results of evaluation are also written into the dossiers, not just for the villagers to see but for future generations. Village democracy here means that all participate in everyone else's life and thus all are equal.

Collectivism is most clearly revealed in the assignment of mandatory work. Since public security in the village is one of the most important criteria of the township investigation team, each village has a militia. Cadres today were often leaders of yesterday's militia. Township Director Qiao explains that to serve as a militia member and receive training once a year for half a month each time

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Trying to change the latter by manipulating the former would cause resistance. It is acceptable, therefore, that Party leadership and market economy adapt to the rule of man and collective culture instead of denying them. Similarly, if the state tries to define "Muslim" merely in terms of policy privilege or legal status, the result will not be fruitful. In the same manner, the lower row will adapt to the upper row in the long run. It is therefore wrong to expect that the preservation of custom and religious identity will eventually overthrow the rule of man or collective cultures. It is equally questionable to expect that policy privileges and legal ethnic status can undermine Party leadership or market economy.

The problems lie in the nature of all the "civilizing" projects of the modern Chinese state: trying to transform the right-hand column into the left-hand one. This outlook is revealed most vividly in the attempts to reduce Muslim ethnicity to individualized, legalized policy privileges. Problems shared with Han villages include the belief that the market economy can change collectivism and that the Party leadership can create village autonomy so as to restrain the local rule-of-man culture. This is not to say that the macro and the non-policy elements will remain unchanged. The changes in the macro and the non-policy elements are slow and often reflect adaptation to state policies or micro practices. Changes are aimed at satisfying the state and keeping it from the non-policy elements. What happens to the "civilizing" projects for the Muslims in the Litong region is that people's dedication to their Muslim identity is deferred until they reach an age when they possess the economic capacity to donate to mosque-building and make the pilgrimage to Mecca. For the state, as long as Muslim people meet state criteria of loyalty and citizenship in the state arena, there is not really much energy left to care about what is going on outside the state, where other Muslims are found. Conscious or not, these Muslim strategies of identity will remain effective in resisting the seemingly inevitable arrival of modernity.

Part V

Ethnic language

Educational practices

Like religion, language is one common feature that can be used to identify an ethnic group. As the cases introduced in Part V suggest, successful maintenance of an ethnic language may paradoxically contribute to assimilation into the mainstream Chinese culture. Officially sponsored language programs typically aim at assimilation, either by preparing children to enter Mandarin-speaking higher education or the market economy, or by making the communication of political propaganda more effective. However, once faced with religious forces, multiple ethnic environments, or lack of market consciousness, language programs lose their focus. The aims of the programs are seen as dubious and the government is unable to appreciate the local lukewarm responses. In Part V, I give different stories of language education and explore the implications for the formation of an identity strategy among the people involved.

The discussion in Chapter 10 tackles the complicated relationships between Mandarin and ethnic languages in China. It first introduces Chinese perspectives on the subject and takes note of the complexity of the issue, while showing that in China no universal language policy is possible. It then examines a few sporadic memoirs on the Mandarin programs in Yunnan to show how the promotion of an ethnic language can assist in learning Mandarin. Finally, the chapter gives reports from field interviews with teachers and cadres in a Korean school in Shenyang. This last case is particularly interesting as it demonstrates that ethnic identity, strengthened by a state-sponsored ethnic language program, makes the state, together with its Mandarin system, a concomitant of ethnic identity and no longer a threat for ethnic Koreans. The ethnic language policy in China after the Cultural Revolution should be considered a success, not because it reproduces this or that identity, or because it consolidates a Chinese nationalistic identity often seen as oppressive, but because it allows the coexistence and hybridization of local ethnic identities.

The purpose of Chapter 11 is to discern from the local perspectives the meaning of assimilation and westernization. The chapter reports on a number of interviews conducted in Xishuangbanna, Yunnan. This is a Dai autonomous region with a number of other ethnic people, such as Aini, Lahu, and Bulang, sharing it. The interviews are mainly with education officials and with ethnic village schoolteachers, especially those in one-teacher schools in the remote

mountains. The interviews suggest that assimilation for the purpose of development and marketization has not yet created citizenship, as it had been expected to do. On the other hand, the government is lagging behind in appreciating the ways in which ethnic people understand the process of assimilation. Only one thing is certain: that the regional space occupied by Xishuangbanna will look different as time goes on. While Dai ethnicity will be continuously redefined through Mandarin programs and educational practices, the meaning of assimilation into Han culture will likewise become more and more diversified.

10 Assimilation through ethnic language in Yunnan and Shenyang

The role of ethnic language education

The extent and the quality of civic participation in state affairs is a defining element of the modern state. Effective participation in politics as well as the market economy requires the development of common vernacular expressions, the free flow of information, and established codes of communication. All these exchanges are enhanced when individuals speak the same language. If a fixed proportion of the population cannot speak the national language, the reach of the state and the market will shrink. This is because communication from one language to another can translate into different meanings, and also because different language structures themselves reflect diverse perspectives on modernity. To learn a different language is to learn a different lifestyle.

In this sense, the language policy of the state towards ethnic minorities cannot but carry serious political and cultural implications. In China, scholars recognize this and argue that a language carries the life experiences of speakers of the language and is also an instrument of cultural assimilation.[1] When Western concepts regarding modernity and modernization began to be spread to China, it was clear that the problem of adaptation to the concept of modernity was more than just an issue of translation. As Mandarin speakers struggle to accommodate Western concepts and experience misunderstanding, distortion, and alienation in the process, it is apparent that it will be even more difficult for speakers of ethnic languages to adapt to the state's modernization projects.

The ability to speak Mandarin is a key determinant that allows members of a minority group to share state and market resources with fellow Han citizens. Although there is already an income or wealth distribution problem among Han citizens, upward social mobility is always easier for native Mandarin speakers than for the minority peoples. From the standpoint of the state, it is imperative that ethnic minorities learn Mandarin in order to enhance their social status. In fact, ethnic cadres in many autonomous regions welcome the assimilation of the local speech into the Mandarin system.[2] The question that has yet to be answered is what attitudes they should have towards the ethnic language.

While recognizing the inevitable dual trend of assimilation and modernization, nonetheless some ethnic cadres, believing that nowadays one cannot afford not

to learn Mandarin, question the linearity of modernist historiography. This does not, however, mean that a universal form of modernization is implicit in such an effort or that it can be used as a set of criteria by which to measure whether modernization has been realized.[3] Assimilation simply means that ethnic minorities have no alternative but to adapt to the modern state and market. There is no reason to expect that the result of this adaptation will be the same as in Han areas, just as adaptation in Han areas has been essentially different from modernization in the West.[4] In short, it would be simplistic to view the acquisition of Mandarin as a contradiction of the influence of local ethnic languages.

Accordingly, assimilation into Han culture can have different meanings for different ethnic minorities. Each minority group has its own cultural endowments, and although adaptation by the minority is more obvious, Han culture is also transformed by the contact. The goals of assimilation must similarly be different for all these groups. This parallels the phenomenon that all Han areas under modernization necessarily retain their own characteristics.[5] The same multi-dimensional developments occur in the process of adopting language. Depending on ethnicity and area, relationships vary between the local use of ethnic language and the learning of Mandarin.

This is why the central government's policy of spreading Mandarin as widely and deeply as possible cannot apply universally. It is almost impossible to have a nationwide Mandarin policy. No human mind can be sophisticated enough to write an a priori model of the logical relationships between Mandarin and each ethnic language. As a result, while it is more efficient to teach Mandarin by restricting the use of ethnic languages in some areas, in other areas the promotion of ethnic languages actually helps the learning of Mandarin. Acquiring spoken Mandarin may mean dramatically different things to learners of different ethnic backgrounds.

The following discussion tackles these complicated relationships between Mandarin and ethnic languages. It introduces the Chinese perspectives on this subject and notes the sophistication of the realization that no universal language policy is possible. Then the chapter examines some memoirs concerning Mandarin programs in Yunnan to suggest how the promotion of an ethnic language can assist in learning Mandarin. Finally, it reports on field interviews with teachers and cadres in a Korean school in Shenyang. This last case is particularly interesting as it shows that an ethnic identity strengthened by a state-sponsored ethnic language program makes the state, together with its Mandarin system, a concomitant of ethnic identity for ethnic Koreans, rather than a threat.

Teaching in ethnic languages

Teaching in an ethnic language instead of in Mandarin is seldom aimed at the preservation of the ethnic culture. Rather, education officials often see the ethnic language as a stepping stone to the eventual adoption of Mandarin in teaching, with the ultimate goal of assimilation to the mainstream culture. Obviously, when ethnic children start school, they do not speak Mandarin, and thus it does not

make sense to teach them using texts in Mandarin – their intellectual development would be hindered because the contents of the texts would not be learned.[6] In contrast, teaching in the ethnic language would make children familiar with the values and discourses in the texts that help them learn and accept Mandarin at an older age.

Official documents record a number of successful cases of teaching in the ethnic language, but there is a weakness here as well. According to officially recognized statistics, there are a total of fifty-five ethnic minorities speaking at least eighty different languages. Fifty-three minority groups have their own spoken language, but only twenty-four of them have a written language. Many had their languages before the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949. The government has created a Western romanization system for ten minority languages, allowing for a total of fourteen written languages (i.e. languages invented by the state; there are five others historically existent in Yunnan). This romanized transliteration contributes greatly to bilingual education.

In reality, however, there are not many ethnic teachers who can assist with bilingual education. Moreover, the lack of bilingual teaching experience and an undeveloped philosophy of bilingual teaching does not allow for much optimism.[7] Each minority area has its unique geographic and human environment, with a different degree of need for its native language, the more isolated areas apparently being more dependent on their own languages. It is often the case that bilingual teachers are most lacking in such peripheral areas. Also, past practices that have belittled ethnic languages have exacerbated the problem:

> For a long time, owing to our misconception about the issue of language in minority areas, we regarded the issue as an artificially created one and therefore ignored the applicability problem of the written ethnic languages. Is it right that each of the fifty-five ethnic minorities in China should have only one language created for them? Which ethnic people can use Mandarin? Which group would need more than one language? These are questions in need of learned answers. In the past, some areas did not recognize the real situation concerning the use of ethnic language and indiscriminately enforced the use of Mandarin. Some other areas enforced the learning of ethnic languages. Still other areas with mixed ethnic members might impose one common language on all in the region. There have been a lot of problems.[8]

From the above remarks, one can infer four dimensions of bilingual education in determining the style of assimilation into the Mandarin system: language realities, availability of teachers, geographical environment, and language policy.

Highly assimilated groups, such as the scattered Muslims and Man in the northeast and the Tujia people in Hunan, do not have a problem designing an appropriate bilingual program. Bilingual teaching is not applicable to mixed ethnic areas, either, such as in certain mountainous areas in Yunnan, where a village school takes children from the various ethnic tribes nearby. For ethnic minorities

dispersed across large geographical regions, such as the Tibetans, each individual locality could use a carefully developed language program. Only if ethnic groups reside in close geographical proximity is it proper to have a single bilingual teaching model, much like the program that is used in the Southern Gansu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture.

Even there, officials still need to decide which of the ethnic dialects should be the major languages along with Mandarin and which dialects should be regarded as supplementary languages. For other, more compact ethnic populations such as the Xibo and Uygur in Xinjiang, more teachers are available, and a system linking elementary schooling to college education is possible. Dispersed populations usually have problems in applying ethnic languages in teaching, while large, dense areas typically begin with the ethnic language and eventually move into the Mandarin system.[9]

The goals of bilingual education are, accordingly, diversified. For some, bilingual education is aimed at preserving the ethnic language while providing children with the ability to speak and use Mandarin. This is particularly true where ethnic residences are built close together. This kind of bilingual education is usually not suitable for ethnic minority children living in cities. Here the ethnic language cannot serve as a tool of urban communication. At most it is the subject of a course. Children living in large cities in China lose exposure to the ethnic language environment.

The characteristics of an ethnic language also determine which subjects should be taught in that language. Some languages lack vocabularies or structures essential for science education and are used mainly in literature, art, and indoctrination classes. In the last of these types of class, the use of the ethnic language will not diminish as the level of education advances. Examples of bilingual education divided by subjects include Mongolian in Qinghai, Uygur in Xinjiang, and Russian, Hasake, and Tibetan in southern Gansu.[10] In northeastern China, Koreans are unique in the sense that their language is taught with the specific goal of preserving Korean identity. For Korean schools, Mandarin is the subject of a course, not the official language used in teaching.

The more popular goal of bilingual education is to smooth the transition for minorities from being a part of their ethnic grouping to being a part of Chinese national society. In these cases, children typically speak only their ethnic language before their education begins. Bilingual education is a necessary step to bring them eventually into the Mandarin system.

But in areas like Menghai County in Xishuangbanna, Yunnan, people of mixed ethnicity live in small, geographically close villages, as the She do in Lishui. In these cases, ethnic children will probably have to find jobs outside their traditional area of residence, so acquiring Mandarin-language skills is crucial to their career development. In other words, whenever ethnic minorities consider assimilation into Han society as the key to a better life, the goal is eventually to jettison the ethnic language. This transition has been nicknamed the "crutch philosophy," meaning that bilingual education is in effect a crutch to be put aside when children acquire Mandarin.[11]

Finally, the goal of bilingual education can be just a means to an end. For example, when bilingual teachers and teaching materials are not available, bilingual education is at best improvised. It is tentative, contextual, sometimes even exotic. Since bilingual education is a major criterion for determining whether a school is an ethnic school and whether ethnic students get extra points in the high school entrance examination, many schools pretend to be bilingual.[12] Such schools tend to undertake some superficial teaching in the ethnic language, but neither for the sake of preserving the ethnic identity nor for the sake of smoother assimilation.

From the state's point of view, the ideal situation for policy administration would be if all the territories could speak the same language. Even well-designed policies may unintentionally leave out ethnic minorities who do not understand the policies. If this took place all the time, ethnic minorities would lack the ability to participate in policy, either as contributors to it or as beneficiaries. In either case, they would not be able to identify with the state.

More serious is that members of an ethnic minority may feel a closeness towards members of the same group who live on or across a border. This explains why the formation and reproduction of minority identity is such a sensitive issue and why teaching in the ethnic language has always incurred suspicion from certain government offices. Many used to believe, and a number of educators probably still believe, that insufficient assimilation would shake the foundation of the PRC.

The reason bilingual education rarely touches directly on politics is that it is typically argued that children who learn two languages at the same time suffer from too much work. It is also assumed that such students are likely to master neither the languages themselves nor the subjects they are being taught. But research suggests otherwise.

First of all, without the use of the ethnic language, children drop out quickly because they do not understand their teachers and so lose interest in schooling. A survey in Fenghuang, Western Hunan, conducted in 1984 shows that Miao children undergoing Mandarin teaching spent much more time on school work than did Han students. This is especially so in the case of students in the lower grades. Miao first-graders, for example, spent 60 percent more time than Han students on learning texts.[13] Lower-graders are crucial targets in the campaign to keep children in school. Indiscriminate application of Mandarin education would threaten this campaign.

If children cannot understand the subject matter and drop out, state policy will not reach villagers, which goes against the purpose of promoting Mandarin in the first place. The situation is made worse if children do not learn the written form of their own ethnic language, for if policies are translated into their ethnic language, they will not be able to appreciate them. Contrary to the expectation of those who want to promote Mandarin to strengthen the foundation of the state, premature Mandarin education actually undermines it.

The more practical goal of education is to reduce the number of illiterate people. Since parents belonging to ethnic minorities are generally illiterate, they cannot help children with their schoolwork. As a result, children may remain as illiterate

as their parents. This is a problem even among those groups long believed to be relatively educated and literate, such as the Bai people in Dali, Yunnan. While it is clear that bilingual education is crucial to fight illiteracy in ethnic villages, some Han educators nonetheless worry that if ethnic-language education is successful, all Han villagers in ethnic areas could face the dilemma of becoming *de facto* illiterate.[14] Critics of ethnic-language education question the rationale of teaching in the ethnic language at a time when the whole country speaks Mandarin.

Scholars reflect on this Han-centrism and remind readers of the fact that learning is a matter of motivation. If the use of the ethnic language in teaching provides motivation for further learning, then Mandarin teaching in the future will have a better base. One scholar specifically criticizes the juxtaposition and the image of rivalry between Mandarin and the ethnic languages:

> Minorities must grow faster and must endeavor to learn Mandarin and other foreign languages. This is good for the consolidation of relationships among various nations and conducive to the exchanges of cultural knowledge and information. However, this is not to say that minorities can abandon their own languages. There is always the thinking that, with a smaller population, diverse residences, and the incapacity of the ethnic language to accommodate advanced scientific knowledge and information, minorities should combine two steps into one by learning Mandarin to avoid detouring or over-burdening students. This kind of view and proposition is baseless, and certain practical tests have proved it inaccurate. In addition, Mandarin is a language that has various tones with each having several meanings, and is very difficult to learn or to memorize. [It is best] to teach ethnic students their own language first, then they can use their language to help in taking note of the pronunciation and definitions. From this practical perspective, teaching in the ethnic language reduces, not increases, the students' burden.[15]

When the state actively intervenes by providing bilingual education, it can expect a better governing environment by establishing communication patterns with local minorities. What the state needs to do is to discern whether children are able to master their own language to the extent that it can serve as a base for learning Mandarin and, eventually, teaching in Mandarin. It usually takes less than a couple of years for children to be ready for Mandarin. They learn the ethnic language very quickly because of their constant exposure to it at home. When they begin to develop intellectually, they are able to understand various television programs broadcast in Mandarin, which prepares them for Mandarin education later in school. With full understanding of the texts in the first couple of years, students will be intellectually ready to learn advanced texts, even if they are moving into a new language system at the same time.[16]

Finally, areas that adopt the crutch philosophy normally have a written language that uses a romanized system. Children are able to grasp most of it in less than a year and can enter the Mandarin system even earlier.

In fact, in all the constitutions written since 1949, there is always a stipulation that minorities have the right to develop their own languages. The exception is the Great Leap Forward campaign of 1958, where the idea was spread in ethnic areas that ethnic languages were useless.[17] In 1983, the government said that primary and junior high education should be taught in ethnic languages. The Ethnic Autonomous Law repeats the rights of minorities to use texts written in their own languages and be taught in those languages. It has become the consensus among government officials today that bilingual education can protect the minorities' sense of dignity, which is helpful not only for the development of a higher level of state identity but also for the execution and exposition of policies. In the 1990s, more seemed to agree that bilingual education and assimilation into the Han culture were no longer opposites.

Yunnan's experiences in literature

Yunnan is unique in the sense that there are over twenty ethnic minorities living in the province. To my knowledge, no systematic comparison of bilingual programs across various autonomous regions is available. The goals of bilingual programs vary by regions. Ethnically mixed settlements, are common in Yunnan. Where there are small villages composed of individuals of different ethnic backgrounds, people are forced to use Mandarin once they are outside their own small village.

The social preconditions for the preservation of ethnic languages are therefore far from perfect. Since other ethnic villages do not speak Mandarin well, the inability to use Mandarin with them guarantees that the learning environment for Mandarin will not be good. Despite the complication of the language-learning situations, and despite the existence of various opinions on bilingual programs, all such programs seem to share at least one goal: that of reducing illiteracy as much as possible. Concerning this aim alone, a large number of studies have been recorded in the literature. The lesson is that the learning of ethnic languages is crucial in reducing illiteracy.

Mr Zhao Mingwu, an ethnic Bai teacher at an ethnic Lisu school in Makuadi Township of Bijiang County, strove to learn the Lisu language to enhance the literacy rate of the villagers. He personally started an anti-illiteracy night school, which successfully trained local cadres to keep accounting books in the Lisu language.[18] Mr Zhao was brave indeed, as he started the Lisu-language school before the time of reform, a time when Mandarin was the only official language allowed in school. Moreover, his teaching in the school was effective, because he himself had learned the Lisu language to aid him in his teaching.

In another case, Mr He Zian, who worked in the Bureau of Education in Daguan County, grew concerned about the Miao language. At the beginning of the 1980s, he organized ethnic Miao teachers to edit a Miao-language textbook and to print reading texts for Miao peasants. On the basis of these texts, the provincial government was able to develop further an experimental text for the Miao people in other parts of the province. Mr He expanded his Miao classes in order to improve local literacy. The difficulty is that the Miao language has

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Others learned at home by themselves or looked for teachers from the cities. Women who needed to stay home got help from other women who learned the language at night school. Some families sent one family member to night school, and then that family member would come back to teach others. The government was happy to see studying replace alcohol-related or religious and superstitious activities.[31]

The Korean language in command

Geographically opposite to Yunnan in the southwest are the Korean communities of the northeast. In this region, ethnic Koreans have been taught in Korean since 1952, so that ethnic Koreans have become the most educated ethnic group in the PRC. Mr Li, Bureau Chief of the Education Commission in Liaoning, recalled that during the Cultural Revolution, Korean education was restricted and all policy privileges Korean schools had previously enjoyed were stopped. Many ethnic Korean parents at the time decided to send their children to nearby Han schools.[32] After the Cultural Revolution ended, Korean education was rehabilitated.

Today, Koreans attending schools from elementary school all the way through the senior high levels are taught in Korean. When they take the college entrance examination, their questions and answers are given in Korean.

Plate 14 The bilingual title of a Korean-language primary school, Shengyang, Liaoning

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According to Professor Lou Chengwu of Northeastern University, all the texts they use in school are simply Korean versions of Chinese texts. Mandarin is no more than an ordinary course in Korean schools. In elementary schools, Mandarin is taught five times a week, each class lasting forty minutes. The expectation of the local government is that Korean children's level of Mandarin will reach that of an average third-grade Han school student. In reality, Korean students are able to develop a wider capacity for new language than Han students typically do. Students at Korean schools learn English at the same time, and Japanese is offered too. Korean students' ability to speak Japanese tends to be much higher than that of Han students.[33]

Korean parents pay close attention to education. Professor Lou estimates that 50 percent of Korean children in Shenyang, Liaoning, eventually finish high school, and half of those enter college. Their Mandarin ability is naturally behind to begin with, but most catch up before completing their second year. Many Korean students actually surpass the performance of Han students by their junior year. Korean intellectuals teaching at college level have also grown in number, surpassing other ethnic groups in relative terms. Every academic department at Northeastern University has hired at least one Korean professor.

Educational development for Korean children is related to living conditions and population shifts. As more and more Korean families move to the city, schools in more remote areas are being forced to close down. In the mountainous region of Shenyang municipal district, twenty of the fifty Korean village schools were forced to close in the last few years of the twentieth century because of out-migration from the area. These village schools are typically located in small, geographically close villages. A small number of families leaving for the city could threaten the future operation of these schools.

Korean is much harder to learn than the ethnic language in Yunnan, which has been romanized. Among the urban Shenyang Koreans, many children do not speak Korean before they start school. Some schools offer pre-school Korean classes. Xita School, an elementary school in Shenyang famous for its Korean-language education, opened this type of class. The Xita experience suggests that pre-school Korean education can cut the adaptation time enormously once formal education starts at the first grade.

Korean teaching faces two constraints. One is the printing of texts. Since only a small number of copies of textbooks are needed, their cost is high, and that of teachers' manuals even higher.[34] Recent emphasis on social and cultural propriety education has caused difficulties, for no Korean texts are available. Korean newspapers too find it difficult to survive without the government's willing and active sponsorship.

The other constraint is the availability of teachers. Teachers recruited by Xita in recent years have all graduated from either Korean Normal School or Shenyang Normal School. Most teachers at Xita have a degree above the level of junior college. The ratio will increase to 90 percent in 2002. Twenty-eight teachers are currently enrolled in the Border Correspondence University. Over ten have graduated already. Some then enter ordinary college for further education.[35]

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> "If you look at intermarriage between minorities and the Han people, Koreans are the most conservative. Perhaps Muslims are comparable. Other ethnic minorities not in isolation or in densely populated residential areas witness many more intermarriages. This is mainly because the Koreans preserve their language in its entirety but also because the Korean tradition cares very much about children's education. Besides, Korean is not a difficult language compared with Mandarin. If all six in a family speak Korean, to marry someone who cannot [speak it] would really create an inconvenience."

Aside from the fact that most ethnic Koreans are more eager to look for marriage opportunities in South Korea than in the Han population of northeastern China, the Korean identity issue is not a salient issue in politics. This lack of emphasis probably results from the fact that government language policy gives the Korean population in China a sense of dignity and being respected. Another reason is the comparative underdevelopment of North Korea, which makes the Chinese identity remain attractive. But the most important reason why Korean identity is not a political issue is that Chinese patriotic education is rendered effective by being taught in Korean, which also suggests that there is no contradiction between being part of a Korean minority and being a patriotic Chinese. According to Mr Zheng,

> "Education regarding the Chinese nation is abundant, while that regarding the Korean nation is relatively limited. Love for the fatherland refers to love for China. Our nationality is Chinese. This belief is not the result of just one or two years of indoctrination. It has been there for generations. Before 1949, the education was totally Korean in essence. It was changed later. This is to say that our ethnic-national identity has witnessed a drastic change. We are in our fifties, knowing little about Korea. Historically and geographically speaking, we are a part of the Chinese nation. We were born here and grew up here. We received our education here. So, we are an ethnic minority in the Chinese nation."

It is nonetheless worth noting that Korean-language education and the Korean identity are intrinsic to the existence of the ethnic Korean minority. Mr Jin commented:

> "Korean people in Shenyang cities pay close attention to Xita School. They would be very angry if the school were not managed well. The existence of the Korean nation in the peninsula is a [sign of our life and identity]: only if they thrive can the Korean minority in China find meaning. This is the Korean consciousness. We've had adaptation problems while facing the drawbacks of capitalist development. For Koreans, human relationships are not measured by money and it is good that we still keep this tradition. We Koreans are a miserable people in history. Japan colonized Korea. We

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of each individual locale. It is a mistake to focus too much on the authenticity of these reproduced and practiced identities and ignore the possibility for local creativity by groups and areas making their own adaptation. The ethnic-language policy in China after the Cultural Revolution should be considered a success not because it reproduces this or that identity, or consolidates a Chinese nationalistic identity often considered oppressive, but because it allows for the coexistence and hybridization of local ethnic identities.

11 The impact of schooling on Dai consciousness in Xishuangbanna, Yunnan

The importance of teaching

In theory, westernization and assimilation into Chinese culture are not compatible processes. At the beginning of Republican China, for example, many revolutionaries as well as intellectuals were torn between the Chinese and Western civilizations, unable to bring these two forces into harmony. In reality, however, the choice has never been absolute. Those influenced by different forces of civilization have displayed a variety of responses which no model of human behavior can successfully predetermine. While China adapts to the multiple, contradictory, constantly evolving facets of modernity, no one can define what being Chinese means. It is often politics that sensitizes the issue of Chinese versus Western and that compels ordinary people to rethink their identity as Chinese and choose a fixed position in the Western/Chinese dichotomy.

Along with the establishment of the People's Republic in 1949 and the consolidation of Chinese sovereign borders after that date, the stereotyped juxtaposition of Chinese against Westerners continued to enjoy popularity in official Chinese discourses on China's future direction. However, minorities in remote mountainous border areas have experienced entirely different processes of state-building. For them, Westernization and assimilation into Han culture are not always separate processes. In fact, even Han officials in these areas conceive of assimilation as an instrument of westernization, though for different reasons.

Minority lifestyles worry Han officials because a good number of minority citizens do not know that they are now citizens and therefore, in theory, represent the highest will of the Chinese state. Many ethnic tribes continue to live in a nebulous worldview of heaven and earth. Accordingly, the most important mission of the state's assimilation project is to teach them how to fulfill citizens' duties and enjoy the concomitant rights.[3] With this mentality, the government typically evaluates its own work in ethnic areas by looking at how well ethnic minorities adapt to the market system and perform in the education system. The goals are to improve the market system for the benefit of minorities and to prepare ethnic people for future leadership in public affairs. Here, few would consciously distinguish westernization from assimilation into the Han Chinese culture.

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fields after using up the land's nutrients. To the state, this appears to be an extremely inefficient way of using land and one that leads to environmental problems, and only recently has the state become more attentive to this problem. Another example is hunting, which has for generations been a way of life, but is viewed today by the state as a threat to wildlife and an environmental concern. Lifestyles involve complex social categories such as gender roles, religious rituals, language structures, and political conventions. When the concept of the sovereign state reaches the mountains, it shakes ethnic villages in all respects. In the language of state officials, there is a sense of the "white man's burden" in that mountain minorities do not walk straight into modernization and need to depend on the state for a living – a seemingly endless transitional process.

Conspicuous on all roads leading to the mountains in Xishuangbanna and on all village walls once deep in the mountains and far from "civilization" are banners and signs warning against the abuse of "public property." Posters in big characters warn against "embezzling public property" (*qinzhan gongchan*), "embezzling road property" (*qinzhan luchan*), "embezzling public roads" (*qinzhan gonglu*), "illegal construction" (*wei jian*), and so on. The government's policy is to "close the mountains and procreate the woods" (*feng shan yu lin*). The idea is to have dense forests protecting the land from erosion so that fields for cultivation will not suffer floods.

To take another example, in Xishuangbanna's Menghai County, one township office wall had a painted slogan, "Turn in all the guns at home." This is an attempt to stop the ethnic villagers from hunting. In reality, however, hunting is no longer just a supplement to a subsistence economy but a market-driven activity. Indeed, no tourist can stop at any small restaurant on the way to the mountains without being offered the precious meat of deer and pangolin. One can make a number of observations.

First, the method of land use was in existence long before the establishment of a sovereign order. On the one hand, the state would like to "civilize" what are considered the barbarian practices of underdevelopment in the mountains. On the other hand, the modern sovereign state does like the idea of multiculturalism and always pledges to protect minority cultures. As a result, forests and mountains, which are intrinsic to Xishuangbanna's minority lifestyle, are no longer legally accessible to minorities still living in the mountains. The multiculturalism promoted by the state has to obtain its meaning from something other than the preservation of minority culture. This can be done by saying that minorities will enjoy policy privileges granted exclusively to them. As a result, multiculturalism is not about culture but about allocating state resources to people believed to share a distinctive genetic heritage.

Second, the first concept of "civilization" that minorities in Xishuangbanna learn is not about the environment but about the workings of the market. In all the places I have visited, "the market" is not very different from "money" to most people in the mountains, whether or not they belong to minorities. In the past, money meant little to people under a subsistence economy. Since the modern state uses an economic growth scale to measure the performance of local officials, many of whom are from minority ethnic groups, all policies have

one common purpose – that is, to encourage villagers to earn as much money as possible. Naturally, for some Xishuangbanna dwellers, the quickest way to make money is through tourism, which attracts Han tourists wanting to eat exotic animal meats such as pangolin. Assimilation into Han culture in the tourist sense assists ethnic villagers in attracting and satisfying Han people's imagination about the villagers' ethnicity. But there is obviously an inherent contradiction here with the government's concern with environmental conservation.

Other villagers sell labor for meager monetary reward. Few exchanges take place in a typical market environment. Ethnic villagers are usually at a great disadvantage in terms of uneven access to information, legal protection, Han wholesalers' monopoly, and so on. Opening to the market leads to more and more dependence on exotic pretension, which is the only sure way of making quick money.[1] Sensitive readers can immediately draw from Xishuangbanna a parallel to popular practices in many Han tourist sites where peddlers illegally sell ancient coins, china, paintings, etc. to Western travelers looking for Oriental (or Orientalist) items. In the same vein, Han tourists come to Xishuangbanna looking for precious animals, butterflies, and plants, and for images of exotic clothing. The irony is that this kind of assimilation and westernization works well for minorities, to the fury of Han officials. In contrast, an unhappy Dai cadre, who disliked environmentalism, complained to me, "I think an elephant has a higher value than a Dai in the eyes of the government."

More ironic still is that those practices that are most destructive of the natural environment in Xishuangbanna are state sponsored or, at least, state affiliated. Dai people and other minorities have lived in Xishuangbanna areas for thousands of years and have been able to maintain some sort of harmony with the earth even though fire planting, or slash-and-burn agriculture, is not the most efficient method of production in the long run. In comparison, the installation of people's communes and the launch of the Great Leap Forward promoted the idea of man overpowering heaven, leading to the first serious river pollution and vast loss of land resources.

In the past four decades, national enterprises and the People's Liberation Army (PLA) came to Xishuangbanna. The rise of collective farms, especially, caused problems because of the campaign for large-scale production. Since the 1980s, the PLA has joined the drive for profit. Chasing after the market trend, PLA commanders changed their production plans every few years to different cash crops. According to one local source, this has damaged the land tremendously. Starting roughly at the same time, Han developers abused the forests and other land resources by bribing tribal leaders.

Local ethnic officials who have witnessed recent developments agree with their Han colleagues in Xishuangbanna and believe that the only solution to this mess is more rapid assimilation into Han culture. It is in the interest of the Dai people, they believe, to learn how to deal with the Han people on the Han's terms. In reality, however, faster assimilation does not seem to be an all-round solution, as local ethnic responses to assimilating projects suggest that current education practices will not necessarily lead to genuine and useful assimilation in the near future.

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low-quality education in a village school. Many villages are just too poor to have a qualified teacher. Teachers in mountain villages are usually not very motivated. Despite the fact that some take a very serious approach, most teaching is likely to be minimal indeed. Often teachers simply teach in Mandarin, which hinders the learning of the children. In many areas where other ethnic groups mix with Dai villages, bilingual education is impractical.

When a village is lucky enough to have a public teacher, with a certificate issued and salary paid by the government, he or she usually wants to leave for an urban school as soon as the opportunity arises. The only exception is when a public teacher is originally from the same township as the one in which he or she teaches. Even in these cases, they may still be eager to find a better living environment out of the mountains. With a salary of 600 renminbi a month, in comparison to less than 200 for a teacher without a certificate, public teachers not only want to leave the mountain village schools but also want to leave the much better-equipped mountain middle schools. Mr Wang, a township middle school director for curriculum and a Han, explains:

> "The school has twenty-three full-time teachers. Living space for them is rather intense. Every three teachers share a room. The rate of turnover is high. On average, a teacher can find an opening in the city in three to four years. The teaching equipment cannot cope with the needs. There is no laboratory, for example. During the winter, we have no wood to heat hot water for bathing because of the policy that we should protect the woods. Teachers go home once a week to bathe. Few teachers want to stay. I have been here for ten years and seen eleven classes graduate. Except for Mr Luo, all the others are new here, most arriving one or two years ago. Very few of them have been here for over five years. Everybody wants to go to the county school for the sake of getting a better education for their own children. They have a rough feeling indeed. Trying to keep them is not a practical way of thinking. I always let them go. The Township Education Office arranges new teachers in replacement every time. This explains our problem, which is that we do not have teachers with experience."

It is only reasonable for teachers to want to leave. Ms Li, an Aini teacher at a village school in Menghai County, tells her own story. She used to teach at a Lahu school, 51 kilometers up in the mountains. She is now very happy with her new school, composed of Han, Aini, and Dai villagers, which is 11 kilometers from the township.

The morale of private teachers is even lower. In Xishuangbanna, there were 607 of them in 1998, each responsible for one village school. In one of the mountain counties I visited, there are twelve one-teacher village schools. The school is barely a school at all in these villages, many being without even a board on which to write legible characters. The single teacher not only teaches but is also the principal, the cook, the janitor, and the cleaner. Such teachers' pay is very low. The official story is that their salary is 200 renminbi a month. Most of

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Perspectives on education

Teaching is especially challenging in villages of mixed ethnic composition. I visited a mountain site where there are two village schools serving three villages, each with its own distinctive ethnicity: Han, Dai, and Aini. The township government would like to combine the two schools, against the will of the Aini village. The Aini people want to establish a third village school exclusively for Aini children. Ms Li, the more senior teacher of the two, told how hard she has worked to keep the three villages together:

> "I brought back from the County [of Menghai] the principle of the policy. That is that the Township's Village Office wants the three villages to combine their schools.[4] The Aini villagers do not appreciate this, wanting there to be a school just for themselves in order to separate them from the Han and Dai villagers. I have tried my best to keep the problems from exploding. For example, not too long ago, an Aini kid carelessly stabbed a Dai kid's eye with a pencil. I managed to control the incident and paid all the medical expenses myself. I conciliated both groups of parents. Now, all three villages have given their consent [to the merger], but some have no money available. In Jinggpa Village, where the Aini villagers live, they have just completed the new water system and need another three years to raise enough money to start the new school."

The combination of students of different ages is no less a problem than the different ethnicities. In the one-teacher schools, it is unusual for curricula at all levels to be taught. The school has only one class and, four years after they start, children will enter the faraway township school. Then the village school will open another class. This means that the age range of children entering is at least three years. In practice, it is often the case that those who miss the class at 7 have to wait until they are 11 before entering the school, making for extreme age difference in classes.

The village school in Zhaoyang, for example, where Ms Li teaches, has children ranging in age from 5 to 13 in the same class. She manages to let the 18-year-old neighboring teacher handle an easier class of 9 to 11. At the time of my visit, this latter class was in its third year. To take another example, in Banghuo Village, where the teacher was not available when I arrived, about twenty students were playing basketball on a muddy court. The two tallest (about 5 ft 10 inches, or 180 cm) wore jeans, with muscles clearly showing on their bare chests. The smallest youngsters could hardly run well, and streams of mucus flowed out of their nostrils.

Xishuangbanna's Commission of Education promotes what it is called double teaching (*fushi jiaoxue*). Accordingly, each village school should conduct two classes at the same time. While the teacher lectures to the first-graders, second-graders should be doing an exercise in the classroom, and vice versa. For the Commission, as Mr Liu, its director of personnel and himself a former teacher, revealed, the

rationale of double teaching is to cope with the shortage of teachers. A further strategy is to have the two schools in the neighborhood cooperate so that one would teach the first- and second-graders and the other, the third- and fourth-graders. In any case, as County Vice-Director Li of Menghai confessed, bilingual education is more difficult under a double teaching system since his county has five major ethnic groups: Han, Dai, Aini, Bulang, and Lahu.

The Mengmai Village schoolteacher, a Han, shared his personal experiences concerning bilingual education. He uses Mandarin only. His own ethnicity is not the same as the village's, which is Dai. He can speak both the Dai and Aini languages but wonders about the Han children in the village. If, however, the Dai language is not used, Dai students are unable to catch up with the language or the curriculum in the first year, which means that they lack the foundation necessary for further education. Commissioner Dao understands the whole problem but nonetheless insists there is no other way. He believed that since he successfully made it through the process, anyone could. Mr Yang, a township director of education, said, "We regularly hold language examinations for teachers and push them to use Mandarin in class even though they do not speak it well."

The impact of language education has yet to reach expectations. The proportion of students attending junior high is low and the proportion of those going on to occupational schools afterwards is even lower. For China as a whole, the policy is that it is a citizen's duty to receive compulsory education for nine years. In Xishuangbanna, the teaching facilities, teachers, and schools are unable to keep up even at the elementary level. The goal of universal junior high education is therefore overly ambitious. More practical is the development of ethnic schools, which is a popular idea currently being experimented with in many parts of the country. Menghai has an ethnic school now and plans to build an ethnic junior high. The eventual goal is to have a senior high and follow with the Ethnic Normal College or Yunnan University in Kunming. County Vice-Director Li, a Han, gives his views:

> "The ethnic school selects from the village schools those who have finished the four years of education and are from poor families. We give them an examination and recruit those who pass it. This ethnic school is a model as well as an experiment. From the experience of managing this school, we will promote similar ethnic schools in other parts of the county. In the future, we want to have an ethnic high school in order to produce ethnic cadres. When Xishuangbanna has its own ethnic high school, we will be able to link up with Yunnan Ethnic Normal College."

It is worth mentioning that there is a class of girls at the first ethnic school. The idea is to develop ethnic women who can achieve "independence, self-strengthening, intelligence, and dexterity." A big-character poster on the wall of the girls' classroom reads, "Support the girl class, benefit the state, the people and the families." What is impressive is that the girls in the class do not learn just

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mentioned the difficulty of following schedules in the mountains. The 18-year-old teacher quoted earlier used to start at 8, but she punished latecomers severely and they all arrive early now. She said she starts classes at 7 in the morning! There is no regularity as concerns the afternoon classes. Some say they start at 1.30, others say 3. In all the afternoon interviews I conducted, however, no matter what time I arrived, I never saw a class in session.

Signs of alienation

Han officials recognize that the greatest challenge to education is that parents are not interested in sending their children to school. Officials of different ethnic groups agree that this is the problem of the "lower" civilizations that are prevalent in the mountainous borders. One scholar of Yi ethnicity in the neighborhood comments from his own experience that economic growth is the only solution to raising the standards of low civilizations:

> "Economic needs can make minorities look for changes. If one thinks that living in underdevelopment is quite satisfactory, that is because one does not know what is going on in the outside world. To put it straightforwardly, this is stupidity. One may get sick sometimes, and then sticking with the mountain life may cost all of one's property."

This understanding may not be sufficiently empathetic with what goes on in the local ethnic mindset. Many Dai villages are prospering from their participation in the market, but still they do not send their children to school. For the Bulang people living on Bulang Mountain, school means little. Ms Ma, a Han teacher transferred from Bulang Mountain to a school in the lower mountains, spent night after night persuading parents to let their children attend school when she first arrived on Bulang Mountain. The reality was that villagers were too poor and the mountains too spread out to allow for schooling. Ms Li, the teacher at Zhaoyang Village, recalled her earlier experience with a Lahu school: "It was so remote, people did not even wear clothes. For the 15- and 16-year-olds, I bought clothes for them. They did not know how to put them on. When trying to wear them, they would accidentally tear the clothing apart."

Vice-Director Li acknowledged that villagers of different ethnicity could regard schooling very differently. In fact, even within the same ethnic group, reasons for not attending school can vary widely. In the case of the Dai, there are at least two popular reasons for parents to shun school. The first is religion. Local religious custom has it that a boy must be a monk in the temple before being an adult. If the boys in the village leave school for the temple life, girls in the same class or village naturally drop out. Mr Yan, a Han in a one-teacher school, observed that few boy-monks had done well in his school. Their marks are low and so is the number going into junior high. He found that if one boy went home, almost all the others would follow suit. The only time a boy got into junior high was when everybody else in that class did also.

Boys need to study at school and at the temple at the same time. This has negative consequences for learning in both places. When I toured a township school, I saw a boy running around wearing a Buddhist cassock. One time when they were wearing cassocks while exercising to modern music was particularly amusing. Afterwards they raced to the front gate to buy watermelon slices from peasant women waiting there. Finishing the slices, all of them threw the rinds onto the ground and ran back to class. In this particular school, attendance is good because village patrol teams responsible for public security are now given the mission of catching boy-monks who stay in the temple during school time and sending them back to school.

If the boy-monks live with their parents, they have to go back and forth between home, the school, and the temple. When the chief monk in the village temple finds a better temple in an urban area, he may disappear overnight. Boy-monks all go home and might well decide not to attend school. Monks in the temple live on villagers' provision of food in the same way that a one-teacher school depends on villagers. Boy-monks speak only Dai and learn to read it in the temple. Commissioner Dao thus enforced a policy that boy-monks must go to school, too:

> "Dai and Bulang boys must serve as novices. This is the local custom and a worldview problem. Today, 70 percent of boy-monks study at school. According to 'Codes of Ethnic Education,' one must graduate from the elementary school before one can serve as a monk in the temple. Some village cadres have a hard time enforcing the code. We specifically stipulate that boy-monks of school age must go to school. There was a religious high tide in 1981 and 1982, resulting in attendance only by girls in certain schools. We maneuvered and adjusted, for example, by relaxing the age limits for elementary schooling. Even monks of over 20 were called to school to study."

The second reason why parents may not want their children to attend school is an ecological one. This has to do with both Yunnan's history and its geography. Vice-Director Tan summarizes the constraint on the education campaign:

> "Yunnan has a lot of land at high elevation. The weather in Yunnan has vertical variance. When one area has bad weather in a certain year, it is at best a regional problem. Drought happens to only limited spots – Yunnan has never witnessed a province-wide drought. Moreover, Yunnan's mountains make transportation really tough, so wars do not come to Yunnan. The very worst scenario one can have involves only local ethnic fighting. Since drought and war do not come to Yunnan, people in Yunnan have no need to move. The ratio of Yunnan people leaving the province is extremely low. It is safer to stay inside a land more suitable for growing crops than go into the competitive outside world. The side effect is that Yunnan people do not care too much about culture or education. The degree of assimilation into the Han is lower than for other ethnic groups in inland areas.

Historically speaking, Han Buddhists and Dai villagers are adherents of different strands of Buddhism. This causes no serious problem in China as a whole but has nonetheless led to local ethnocentrism to some extent. Unlike most officials elsewhere in China, Vice-Director Tan boldly acknowledges that localism and ethnocentrism in Yunnan exist in the form of anti-Han identification. He thinks this perfectly understandable. Implicit in Tan's remarks is a sense of alienation from Mandarin education.

Economically speaking, Yunnan's ethnic people live above subsistence level. Even during bad times, it is not difficult to be self-sufficient. Tan believes that self-sufficiency is a big obstacle to education. He pointed to those whom he considers to be stuck in the backward areas in the hinterland:

> "Educational consciousness is really low among the Lahu and the Bulang people. You may build a good school for them, but they still do not want to enter the school. They eat whatever they find edible. If there is a shortage, they ramble around and gather [food], or they may hunt animals. To put it bluntly, this is laziness and indulgence, and not civilization. The important thing is to tell them loud and clear that studying can help them make more money. They live together and move together. Their thinking is timid, closed, and wary."

Economic growth, however, is not necessarily conducive to an education campaign. According to Dao, parents think that studying in schools is too hard for children, whose lives have nonetheless been getting easier and better in recent years. Mr Fu, a Yi who teaches at Yunnan University, recalled his one-year anti-poverty job in Ninlang County, Yunnan. He found that if they have ample natural resources, villagers do not need to struggle too much in order to live well. With the improvement in the economic situation, people are becoming even less competitive and are becoming milder in temperament. According to a teacher in Mengmai Village, the whole point of having children attend school is to make them into good people, not to have them speak fluent Mandarin. Certainly the growth of tourism requires Mandarin, and it is better when the Mandarin has an ethnic accent so that it appears more exotic. But this is not enough to impel the people into education. The drive for assimilation is not strong anywhere in Xishuangbanna.

Beyond ethnicity and assimilation

Ethnic minorities will have to accept marketization in order to take off economically. Marketization requires assimilation into the Han culture. Many Dai cadres in Xishuangbanna understand the importance of education in facilitating assimilation. Those Han officials assigned to the autonomous region for the sole purpose of helping modernization sincerely recruit children for schooling. Unfortunately, the response from local villagers, particularly those living in the mountains, is at best lukewarm. Interestingly, the sense of resistance is weak,

so that no threat to state patriotism or Party rule is registered. This passive style of resistance or alienation can, ironically, be a more effective way of resisting assimilation.

Visitors encounter no systematic idea of preserving the Dai's own ethnicity in relation to Han culture. Neither can children attending schools have any thought of resisting Han culture. The problem really is the lack of enthusiasm among the local population. This alienation is not based on any clear sense of Dai ethnicity, for the definition of Dai ethnicity or Buddhism is vague, though the knowledge of one's ethnic status is clear-cut. This suggests that ethnicity is more and more understood in the sense of blood kinship alone, rather than in linguistic, religious, or customary uniqueness.

Marketization fails to address the issue of ethnicity except that the state explicitly wishes ethnic groups to get rich as soon as possible. Getting rich could in fact be a vehicle for losing ethnicity rather than reproducing it, unless one regards ethnicity exclusively in terms of blood kinship and is satisfied with a situation in which people of Dai blood prosper. For local Dai people, Buddhism seems more relevant than blood in defining Dai ethnicity. There is a contradiction here, because outsiders typically expect there to be something unique about the Dai cultural heritage, but they judge whether someone is a Dai purely by looking at his or her family lineage. However, in the process of transforming ethnicity into citizenship, it is difficult to discern which influences which. The state would love to see citizenship, together with a consciousness of rights and duties, be practiced in ethnic areas. As marketization and ethnic tourism form a symbiosis, temples and schools are increasingly growing separate. The meaning of progress into citizenship changes accordingly for people in different positions.

The Commission of Education, for one, tolerates no ambiguity in its quest for total assimilation of the Dai into the Mandarin system. It sees Buddhism as a threat. This attitude means little to Dai villagers in the lower mountains, who prosper by selling deer, butterflies, and pangolins. Their high mountain counterparts may see assimilation in terms neither of civilization nor profitability; rather, it is a matter of satisfying the policy of school enrollment. Schooling is like a fee paid to the state in exchange for undisturbed space for Buddhist practices. The market system is still remote to these mountain villagers, who nevertheless periodically perform their duties as citizens. Most of the time, they continue hunting and slash-and-burn agriculture.

This does not mean that Dai ethnicity will remain unchanged. As boy-monks and even chief monks in the temple begin to attend school, Buddhist practices are changing. Buddhism and the worship of Mao Zedong can and must coexist. Marketization will necessarily bring modern elements into the area. Provision for monks will probably evolve into gifts of money. Unfortunately for the promoters of Mandarin, the Dai may not want to leave the region and find a new life in Beijing at all, even when most of them are able to speak Mandarin well.

Living as they do on China's borders, the Dai people would have a richer life if they crossed into Thailand or Burma than if they went eastward. The shared language and religious similarities in the countries to the west create trade

opportunities for those who are lured into the market. In other words, future marketization may not simply mean assimilation into the Han, as most officials of the autonomous regions think it will. Only one thing is certain: that the Chinese border areas occupied by Xishuangbanna will look different as time goes on. While Dai ethnicity will be continually redefined through Mandarin programs and educational practice, the meaning of assimilation into the Han will similarly become more and more diversified.

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Part VI

Ethnic schooling

Sluggish enrollment

When the state initiates contact with peripheral communities and expects to have a lasting influence, enrolling children in school is probably the best vehicle by which to ensure such an outcome. But enrollment drives tend not to be very successful, because of a flaw in the state's concept of education. While education officials may want to help, their assumption that local ethnic cultures are irrelevant or backward may hinder their ability to cajole parents to accept an unfamiliar career path for their children. If the government were to mistake this reluctance for a lack of economic incentive, its subsequent policy would further alienate people belonging to the local ethnic culture and thus stop children going to school.

Education officials at county or higher level typically promote schooling in ethnic communities by linking it to the possibility of a salaried job. Minority students are disadvantaged in the job market and are not particularly competitive in entrance examinations to higher educational institutions. As a result, parents who learn to calculate the immediate benefits of education will naturally place a lower priority on schooling, and this of course leads to a drop in enrollment.

Even before the change in placement policy – which has meant that the government is no longer responsible for seeking jobs for the graduates – enrollment has nevertheless been consistently low in some of the ethnic communities. The Dong culture in southwestern Hunan, the case examined in Chapter 12, is an example. There seem to be serious policy disputes between ethnic and educational sectors at both county and provincial levels. On one hand, ethnic officials are enthusiastically involved in designing ethnic-related education programs. Yet education officials see these changes as redundant because, for them, education in ethnic regions is ethnic by definition and hence has no need of special design. In fact, there are problems similar to those in the Yi case (Chapter 13), in that education without ethnic substance provides only disincentives to parents.

Chapter 13 examines the situation in Liangshan Prefecture in Sichuan. Local Yi culture in general lacks incentives in dealing with either the government or the market economy. Education officials and local teachers blame the historical slave culture for hindering the growth of educational consciousness in the Yi community. In reality, some of those Yi families that belong to the previous slave stratum do send their children to school. Besides, the Yi identity is not at all

weak among young Yi college students. The problem is not with the Yi culture but with the education system and the Chinese state that is trying to impose it. First, the state becomes an obstacle to the local communities because it represents local culture as inferior. Second, state education has little to do with Yi culture, since the contents of schooling remain foreign in appearance. There is no cultural link between the Yi worldview and the state/market system. Finally, state education policy lacks long-term planning and is not reliable from the local point of view.

12 Questioning the meaning of ethnic education in Dong villages

Beyond the current approaches

Enrollment is one of the key issues in ethnic education in China, and has received increasing attention in recent years. To promote enrollment requires the government to develop an approach to understanding parents' decision not to enroll their children. Modern economists are used to a human capital approach in their analysis of investment in education. Political scientists, in contrast, are interested in the state's capacity to penetrate society or mobilize citizens' loyalty through education. In light of a recent poor enrollment record in some of the ethnic minority areas, the human capital approach can explain the cost–benefit reasons why the local people fail to respond to educational opportunities.[1] Statist analysis is useful in pointing out the lack of effective incentives that the state can provide in its enrolling drive.[2]

Both human capital and statist approaches are flawed, however. While the human capital approach uses micro-level analysis and the statist approach is a macro-level one, both seem to accept the same teleology that presupposes a linear historical movement of all societies toward modernization defined in terms of political economic rationalism. Any study with such a predisposition would inevitably saddle the ethnic people in question, who are not comfortable with individualist calculation of secular benefits, with a backward, feudal image as a people awaiting transformation along the track of modernization or enlightenment.[3]

Many thinkers have shown that "tradition" only becomes "traditional" (or backward) after the concept of modernity enters into a meaningful discourse.[4] One crucial step in promoting modernity is the establishment of the school, without which the substitution of modernity for tradition would not appear so natural today. The school defines and reproduces the dichotomy of tradition/modernity. This dichotomy is what has constructed the tradition. In short, discursively, modernity arrives before tradition.

To understand the resistance to or the lack of interest in education in a local community from the point of view of modernity would thus most likely miss the point. Before ethnic people accept the idea of receiving education, it is conceptually impossible for them to resist modernity from a position within tradition.

That position is meaningful only to those embedded in the language of modernity. Accordingly, the lukewarm response of locals to the government's enrollment drive may not be resistance at all, or, at most, may only be qualified resistance, which is not understood as resistance locally.

There are at least four theoretical propositions implicit in all this. The first is that there is no such thing as a universal meaning of ethnic education. Second, people do not calculate their decision regarding educational opportunity only from an individual, micro base. Third, today's education policy is essentially insensitive to incentives that are not oriented towards individual material benefits. Finally, responses to education enrollment campaigns are not subject to deductive modeling or categorization - one must rather learn about each additional practice through case studies.

All four are incompatible with the assumptions of both the human capital and the statist approaches. In fact, authorities representing the state seem to think exactly the opposite, believing that the function of education is to facilitate emancipation from backward ethnic consciousness, which obstructs citizenship in general and marketization in particular. For the state, the fact that ethnicity carries different meanings in different localities is not important. What is important is that all local communities, ethnic or not, end up in the same direction: that of a unified, modern China.

This is why state authorities do not see ethnic education as a policy that will preserve ethnic conventions. Rather, it is an instrument to convert ethnicity, believed to be insignificantly authentic, into a universal citizenship. There is rarely any doubt that local ethnic communities may need a different kind of education to prepare their future generations for directions that are outside the conceptual boundary of modernity, and therefore unnoticeable, but already in formation. For policy-makers, the primary concern is economic growth. They want children in ethnic areas to learn how to act rationally as autonomous individuals so that they can join the market and the state without familial bondage. Policy-makers also expect these participants to remain in their hometowns, not to emigrate to coastal cities, because they contribute to local development.

The following discussion will try to move beyond the tradition/modernity dichotomy that has become rooted in current ethnic education policy. Accordingly, I contend that the education policy brings about results that cannot be fully presented in either the human capital or the statist analyses. To individualize a unit of education in theory as well as in practice may damage the trust in the enrollment campaign. Inappropriate incentives can cause misallocation of already scarce resources. Finally, ethnic education that is ignorant of local responses may be detrimental to the goal of modernization and civic education.

This chapter begins by turning the question on its head by looking at how ethnic communities may understand education in ways different from the authorities. I will pretend that the ethnic boundaries arbitrarily drawn by the state in 1956 are applicable. The intention is to avoid looking at ethnic education from the outside – indeed, to look at it from within, using the perspective of the ethnic communities looking out. There is no assumption, furthermore, that any appearance of the

values of modernity being accepted by the locals is spurious. The goal is to find the meanings not included in the modernity discourse.

The case study for this analysis is the Dong people living in Changanying, a village in the jurisdiction of Changanying Township in Chengbu County, Shaoyang City, Hunan. My purpose is to uncover different meanings attached to the term "education" by people in different positions and reflect critically on the education policy of the provincial authorities. The first step is to introduce briefly a few other cases concerning ethnic education. They include research on the Yi people in Meigu County of Liangshan Prefecture, Sichuan; the Korean people in Shenyang, Liaoning; and the She people in Suichang County in Lishui, Zhejiang; the last of these is described more fully in Chapter 7.

A few cases in comparison

One interesting case of ethnic education is to be found in a Korean school in Shenyang City. All Shenyang's Korean schools, from pre-school through to senior high, teach in the Korean language. Mandarin Chinese is no more than a language course. The high school and the college entrance examinations are held in Korean as well. Many Korean youngsters in Shenyang do not speak Korean because most live in the city. Pre-schools teach them the mother tongue before they enter the elementary class. But the Korean first-years have no problem adapting to the Mandarin system in high school.

In most other ethnic areas, for example that of the Dai people in Xishuangbanna, Yunnan (Chapter 11), the purpose of stressing the ethnic language at the beginning of schooling is to prepare children to enter the Mandarin system at a higher grade, typically the second or third grade. After the transition, students are expected to jettison the mother tongue as a crutch that is no longer needed.[5] The function of the Korean education in Shenyang is obviously the total opposite, yet it is an exception in China. This uniqueness has to do with the close connections the Korean people have historically enjoyed with their neighbors in North Korea. During the current era of openness to the outside world, the Koreans in China encounter no difficulty in communicating with people in both Koreas.

Ethnic-language education of this sort helps to preserve Korean consciousness among the Korean people. The government nonetheless involves itself in all the editing, printing, and distributing of textbooks. These activities all depend on government financial support because of the lack of economies of scale. Printing public-owned Korean newspapers is also a government policy. With the aid of such extensive government investment, the Korean people are currently the most educated people in China, having the greatest proportion of college professors.

The Korean experience is worth noting in the sense that the maintenance of Korean consciousness is no longer incompatible with the people's Chinese identity. The state is locally considered a protector of Korean ethnicity. Despite continued reports of local ethnic conflicts between the Koreans and other ethnic peoples, including the Han, ethnicity and state citizenship are in harmony. Being able to

win the trust of the Korean people and promote official policy through Korean-language newspapers and policy documents, the state is actually in a stronger position to mobilize citizen loyalty.

A second case is She education in Suichang County. Here the She vernacular is the most significant element in defining She ethnicity, an association that becomes increasingly important as people gradually lose their traditional religious practices. However, She teachers strictly prohibit speaking of the vernacular, and parents apparently support this policy out of a desire to ensure that their children will not be disadvantaged in the Mandarin-dominated market when they begin their career. There is now a negative feeling among the She toward their ethnicity. The new popularity of the mountain songs has to some extent repaired this, though the classroom ban on the She language continues.

The third case is Meigu County in Liangshan Autonomous Prefecture. Unlike the former two, Meigu represents a case of clear failure to enroll children in school. It is undeniable that the low level of development in the locality is part of the reason why enrollment has fallen to as low as 56 percent and that the local ethnic junior high school is to close down in 2001, barely ten years after opening. Since the teachers seem to be as devoted as those anywhere else, the blame is easily placed on the so-called backwardness of the local ethnic Yi culture, which many interviewees of mine considered still to be bound by a recently overthrown system of slavery.

In order to put more pressure on the local authorities, educators impose economic sanctions on village cadres whose villages perform poorly as regards enrolling children. In turn, to protect their own interests, cadres put intense pressure on parents to enroll their children. The official rhetoric always attacks the Yi's past slave legacy, and the government paints an attractive economic future for the educated. The problem identified is always related to Yi ethnicity and never connected to current state policy.

Parents, however, resist this with some economic logic of their own. They do not see the economic utility of education and want their children to begin productive work as early as possible. Their view is that education, unlike under the command economy, can no longer guarantee a job in the cities. In any case, their children would not be competitive on the job market against the Han children, nor could they possibly beat Han examinees in high school entrance examinations. Moreover, entering school also means a poor self-image – the children do not feel proud of coming from a Yi family. In the absence of an emotionally positive inclination toward education or convincing economic prospects, enrollment has fallen a long way short of government expectations.

That schooling is useless is a popular perception in those ethnic areas encountering enrollment difficulties. In Man Dazhi Township in Beining, Liaoning, for example, parents told me that children make more money by learning fruit-planting in the fields. In Menghai County in Xishuangbanna, Yunnan, according to my interviewees, some Dai parents did not see the need for education. Because agriculture requires little hard work thanks to a reliable and conducive climate, parents can afford to send their children to temples to learn Buddhist scripture

Plate 16 A "stone-niche Buddha" in a Qiang mountain, Mao, Sichuan

rather than to school. In Wadi Township in Mao County, Ahba Prefecture, Sichuan, many Qiang parents whom I interviewed wanted their children to take advantage of local tourism job opportunities as early as possible.

In all these cases of failure, unlike in the cases of the Korean and the She, one common theme is that ethnicity is considered irrelevant to education. In the case of the Dai, the officials specifically stated that Dai ethnicity was a drawback in modern times.

My experiences in Shaoyang suggest that the reported rate of enrollment in most other places, including Han villages, may be inflated. No village directors can afford to be entirely honest about enrollment difficulties without facing administrative and financial penalties. Local officials under pressure easily resort to economic sanctions and take ethnic education a step further away from being just a plain matter of ethnicity. When I review my own work in the past, I feel that this movement away from ethnic consciousness cannot possibly be the state's purpose, and I will attempt a project that allows me to look out from the inside.

Background information about Changanying's Dong people

Changanying Township is under the jurisdiction of Chengbu County, which is an autonomous administrative district for ethnic Miao people. There are a number of other ethnic groups dispersed in the area, such as Muslims, Dong, and Man. The county Ethnic Commission, which has over ten full-time employees,

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is one of the most active divisions of Shaoyang's municipal Ethnic Commission. When the Hunan provincial government attended the ethnic clothing festival in Kunming in 1999, for example, Chengbu was one of the major participants in the provincial delegation. The primary tasks for the Chengbu Ethnic Commission include bringing about improvements in education, sanitation, and economic development.

In order to provide the provincial government with an impression of good work, local county authorities do not always tell the truth in their reports to superiors. For example, the official record shows that the rate of elementary school enrollment for the county is as high as 98 percent. However, responsible cadres at lower echelons revealed that the actual enrollment figure could be lower than 80 percent. This is especially true in economically backward regions. From the point of view of local cadres, the worst misinformation is not about school enrollment but about the economic situation of the county and some of its townships. The official county financial report in 1999 deliberately covered up the lethargic performance of the previous year. So glowing was the report that as of 2000, the county was no longer qualified to receive extra funds allocated by the central as well as provincial governments to counties or townships below the poverty line. This meant a loss of a few million yuan in special allowances for infrastructure.

Changanying Township is located in the southwest of Chengbu, a little over 200 kilometers from the city. Another 200 kilometers southwestward is the famous tourist city of Guilin, Guangxi. In a sense, this is an inter-provincial region. The main income is from timber, Chinese medicine, and, hopefully in the future, tourism. All three major ethnic groups are present in the township: Dong, Miao, and Man, to give them in descending order of population size. The Man army originally came from Changan (which is Xi'an today) during the early dynasties, which explains the origin of the township's name. The township is composed of two previously separate townships, Changanying and Yanzhai. Changanying Village, where I conducted field research, straddles both units. Forty percent of the villagers are Dong. The two major festivals for the Dong are December 27 as New Year's Day and July 2 as Ancestors' Day.[6]

The journey to Changanying Village is long. Once arriving in Changsha, the capital of Hunan, you can take a minibus to Shaoyang from Changsha's Southern Station, ninety minutes away from the airport. The minibus runs fast and can reach Shaoyang in five hours. Another five hours is required for the bus route from Shaoyang to Chengbu; three more hours will take you to Changanying Township. To sleep, you stay at Nanshan pastureland, about an hour away. Once you leave Chengbu, it is all mountains, indicating the difficulty mountain dwellers have in going to the city or developing the local economy. By a rare chance, I started talking to a senior villager one evening in a Nanshan hotel. I learned that many older Dong had never been to Chengbu in their whole lives; they had only heard that Chengbu was a booming place. It is not so in reality, and the air in the city's few streets is unexpectedly polluted because of emissions from renovated three-wheeled motors serving as cabs.

All households in Changanying Village raise poultry, mainly for subsistence consumption. In Nanshan pastureland, cows scatter in the mountains by themselves, not even in a herd. The same is true of sheep. I saw not one single shepherd boy in Nanshan. All cows are numbered behind the ears so that no one misrakes others' cows for their own. In Changanying Village, the main income comes from younger people who work in the coastal areas and bring money back once in a while. The most popular place for the villagers to migrate to is the city of Wenzhou, Zhejiang. Tourism is just beginning, but in 1999 already accounted for 30 percent of the total village revenue. The other 70 percent depends on the extraction of 60 renminbi per person. In addition, all adult villagers provide a few days of compulsory work every year. In 2000, it was a ten-day duty.

The township middle school, whose principal is a Han Chinese with a normal-school degree from Shaoyang, started in 1987 and the principal began his career in 1998. (A high-school division was closed down by the Shaoyang authorities because of budget concerns.) There are six classes in the school – two of each grade. The enrollment is about 280 students, none of whom is Han. Dong and Miao make up the majority, Man the minority. Only 10 percent of pupils go on to high school after middle school. Three of the fifteen teachers are female and five are Han. Dong males compose the majority of the faculty. In the middle school, there is the joint office for All-Township School, which includes both the middle school and the village elementary schools.

The challenge for the middle school at the time of the interview was that the teaching space was limited. One of the class buildings had stayed half-completed for three years because the funds for it had not come through. The search for teachers is a lesser problem. All Dong teachers are originally from the township, having left to acquire higher education but being sent back after finishing normal school. However, none of the Han teachers is a local. The rule is that Han teachers, once assigned, should not apply for a shift until the third year. But in reality, those with good connections leave after only one year. Equally worth noting is the unfortunate reality that all teachers instruct in courses not of their specialty.

I also spent time at the Yanzhai central elementary school in Dazhai Village. There are twenty-one teachers, mostly Dong and Miao, and roughly 350 students, who are divided into eight classes. Eighty percent of the students are from minority ethnic groups, and the twenty-one teachers share eleven dormitory rooms. Moreover, 160 students live in the school, some sleeping in a room above the kitchen. There were two rooms on the roof. The smaller has four mattresses on the floor shared by twelve students; the larger one is double the size and holds twenty-six students. The school struggles to make money by raising pigs. Villagers help the school by engaging in one construction item a year. It was an athletics field in 1996, faucet water in 1997, a wall in 1998, and a gate in 1999; in 2000 it was a paved trail leading to the paved way.

This background information is useful to the extent that it allows readers to empathize with villagers scattered around a mountainous environment, where human beings appear insignificant in the vastness of nature. There, children

and their parents of course face education in a way very different from those in the cities. People generally are not strongly motivated to receive education. Even when children grow up and leave home for the coastal areas of Wenzhou and Guangzhou, they continue to go back to the mountains regularly, despite the fact that it takes three days to get there from Wenzhou and one day from Guangzhou. Typically, men will take a bride home after a few years and return to field cultivation in the mountains. Civilization does not seem to be irrevocably attractive to Dong villagers. Without understanding the local perspectives, one would easily conclude that the Dong are backward.

Locally perceived education problems

As with many parents in Meigu, Dazhi, Menghai, and Wadi, that education is a useless investment is a popular theory among parents in Changanying Township. Parental attitudes towards schooling have turned a little more favorable in recent years as the forces of modernization have reached the mountains via television screens and tourist contacts. On the other hand, the state's withdrawal from the job market by not placing school graduates has negatively affected the children's willingness to attend middle school. The policy change is especially detrimental to enrollment levels at the occupational school at the middle-school level. As more villagers return from the coastal areas with wealth, children want to leave home for good after they finish elementary school. In other words, parents and students move in opposite directions.

The principal of the township middle school specifically pointed out that his main problem concerning teaching is that students lack motivation. One teacher acknowledged that he and his colleagues have few, if any, strategies to cope with the slow learning of the students. He could only reiterate the value of education in order to keep up at least some minimum interest in learning at school. He himself felt that such a cliché never really provides effective incentives. For reasons unknown at the time of my research, the enrollment for the year 2000 was much better, with fewer than forty students not reporting to school, compared with more than a hundred in each of the previous years.

Cadres working at the Municipal and County Ethnic Commissions explain why enrollment is generally low at Changanying. According to one county official, schooling does not promise a job nowadays. This is particularly annoying from the point of view of both parents and students. Second, the extreme poverty in the mountains stops parents coming up with even the minimum amount of tuition. At Changanying Middle School, for example, the cost of tuition for one student for one semester of the school year 1999–2000 was 360 renminbi. At Yanzhai Elementary School, it took 40 renminbi to cover the room and board of a youngster. The cost was 50 renminbi for a junior high student. Without engaging in commercial activities, families in the mountains are typically short of the money needed to meet such financial demands.

The Dazhai village director is unusually concerned with his daughter's education. He himself is an intellectual who once worked in the township government.

Her tuition in a neighboring province cost as much as 6000 renminbi a year. The daughter called the night before our interview, asking for a monthly payment of 110 renminbi to pay for an after-school math class. The director said he was prepared to sell some of his valuables, including a cow, to collect enough money to support her.

Third, investment in high school carries no guarantee of entrance to college, and without a college degree, the chances of finding a good job in the city are not promising; jobs available to high-school graduates may offer students less money than working in the fields. In the unlikely case that students pass the college entrance examination, meeting the college tuition fees would be even more of a headache than high-school tuition. Finally, parents always worry that possessing a college degree will not guarantee that their children will find a good job after graduation. The uncertainty prevents the parents from seriously considering long-term investment in education. On the whole, the analysis offered by the county official is close to a human capital approach.

The director's report was first submitted to the county government, to no avail. He later resubmitted his findings to the provincial and central authorities; the newspapers even printed the report. This led to enormous pressure from the very unhappy county education commission, for the report was tantamount to an accusation that the enrollment rate officially reported was spurious and that local policy was misdirected.

In fact, the superior municipal ethnic commission shares a similar perspective and is critical of the education commission at the same level. These officials, who are responsible for ethnic policy, believe that the education commission pays too much attention to the execution of a curriculum unrelated to local characteristics and puts too much emphasis on the enrollment rate. Indeed, principals as well as education officials often state their policy goals as increasing the enrollment rate, recruiting qualified teachers, and building school infrastructure.

For example, Yanzhai Elementary School cares most about finding the money to renovate its dormitory, for if the kitchen caught fire someday, it would be a disaster. The principal was most proud of having successfully persuaded the villagers to complete at least one project each year. Changanying Middle school wants money to finish the half-constructed teaching building. When asked to recall his career with the local education development in the past twelve years, the principal of the Joint School mentioned the multiplying of class buildings. Every time when a superior education commissioner arrivies at a school, everyone discusses with him or her about budgeting for additional construction. Commissioners do not come in order to evaluate how appropriate the official curriculum is to the ethnic environment.

The irony is that the education commission itself lacks power in the government budgeting process. Chengbu ethnic commissioners complain that most education commissioners have little interest in ethnic background knowledge, or, if they themselves are ethnic, are not interested in reflecting on their own background. Education commissioners offer such clichés as local teachers being "the greatest teachers in the world," which helps very little. Their praise of teachers who use

their own salary in order to cover the tuition of the poorest students sounds hypocritical because any teachers not making such a sacrifice would be penalized financially by local authorities for losing students. The status and fringe benefits of teachers depend on the enrollment outcome.

This explains why the parents of young teachers care very much about the school situation. Most parents are worried when they hear that their child has been assigned to a position at Changanying. Fortunately, a generous donation from a Taiwanese businessman helped set up a class building for the township middle school, a project which was completed in 1999. This dramatically improved the appearance of the school setting. Not knowing that this new development was an isolated event, parents of the new teachers of 2000 were greatly relieved on seeing the new building when they escorted their child to his or her new assignment. Some said that it was great to have their child to teach there. The principal described how the look on the new teachers' faces changed from one of grievance into smiles.

In this process, parents, teachers, education commissioners, and principals collude in creating an education discourse centering around school facilities and nothing else. For the principals, the primary mission is to raise more money for school infrastructure. For the education commission, how to move and allocate scarce resources and squeeze out local contributions is the main problem. For teachers, as long as they do not have to go back to the tree-made bed to sleep, the bamboo chair to sit, or the mountain cave to teach, they can tolerate the next three years.

Teaching quality, as well as the content of teaching, is not for discussion at the Education Commission, as the commission has no role to play in writing school texts. Teaching content, for instance, is the work of the Ministry of Education, with the support of supplementary texts prepared by the provincial authorities. Similarly, the authorities have a very limited supply of teachers, and those they do have are only interested in openings in the cities. They do not want to hear opinions on things that they have no power to handle, or to jeopardize their chances of promotion by challenging the job done by their superior.

The human capital approach thus leads to a vicious cycle. People learn to think in terms of investment but unfortunately do not have control over sufficient material resources to decide on their use. Some ethnic commission cadres raise issues of ethnicity in the process of education. Although they are unfamiliar with the popular views on education in the mountainous ethnic areas, the issue of ethnicity, which is what concerns them, may be precisely what is lacking in the making of current education policy.

Education without ethnic characteristics

Although it is a non-issue in Changanying Township's education system, ethnicity is nonetheless a symbol of the community. In fact, the county government sees Changanying as a model of how ethnic culture can be preserved. For Hunan, this is a symbolically important issue because there are thirty-nine ethnic groups

in the province, more than in the other internationally well-researched minority province, Yunnan. However, the government treats education from a completely different angle as the instrument of state-building. Education is presumably designed to emancipate citizens from backward traditions or values and instead to make them active individual participants of productive as well as political systems. Ethnicity is a matter of emotion, not of rationality, and therefore should not be on the government agenda. For the government, ethnicity means having balanced representation of minority people in public positions; other meanings are in the social and cultural realms.

Consequently, when the Beijing Ministry of Education decided that all schoolchildren should join a "quality education" program designed specifically by each school, Changanying should have used the program to promote local traditions. The purpose of this program is to create room for developing aptitudes outside the long-standing exam-oriented teaching style. Han schools typically interpret quality education as extracurricular programs in art, music, athletics, and so on (see Chapter 6). Surprisingly, most of the ethnic schools I visited have done the same, though ethnic dancing is perhaps the only item in "quality education" that exists universally.[7] (Not surprisingly, it is not the major item, and sometimes even refers only to ethnic dancing in general, not specifically to the local ethnic group's traditional dance forms.)

Changanying is no exception. When I was there, the quality education program had started only ten days before. This was at least a couple of years behind most other mountain areas and five years behind the cities. The irrelevance of ethnicity in the school environment partly explains the inability of teachers to find suitable programs for mountain children. In view of the praise of the township as a model of ethnic culture, the responses from schools were, ironically, lukewarm. The ethnic traits that appear in the village life makes the school's lack of ethnicity incomprehensible.

For example, the Dazhai village director and Party secretary dress in Dong clothing regularly, even if they are not receiving guests, attending meetings, or engaging in social activities. Of course, the so-called Dong-style clothing is as much an invention as a custom, for the featuring of a few yellow lines on the traditional plain blue cloth is a new design. When villagers speak to one another, they do so in the Dong language. They love to sing. Men play a reed instrument and women sing along. The village director once invited a performance team to sing for me. Later, however, two elderly women on the spot decided that they wanted to sing for themselves for fun. When asked, they sang one song for me in Mandarin but used the Dong intonation. According to the village director, everyone in the village, young and old, can sing and dance. They often gather together in the evening on a stone platform opposite the Yanzhai School across the river and sing. They celebrate all the festivals together by the rock platform.

As with the Tujia–Miao people in Yongshuen, many households have the characters for Heaven, Earth, State, Parent, Teacher painted on the wall facing the gate, signalling the reverence for authority inherent in Confucianism. Ancestor worship is another important feature of the village. All the public inscriptions

Plate 17 A Dong lady performing for visitors and enjoying herself, Chengbu, Hunan

I saw in the village praise the virtues of ancestors. There are two major surname groups in the village, Yang and Meng, all members of which keep a long list of their forefathers' names. The village compact, which other villages use to regulate economic activities and policy administration, is mainly used for inculcating ethical norms and moral discipline. Symbols and practices reproduce the image of the Dong as a distinct genetic group.

Young people working in the coastal areas also celebrate all the festivals together. These young workers send their money back home to the mountains, constituting the hometown's largest source of income in recent years. All those households that now have a color television are those with children working in the coastal areas. People still remember the turning point as the year 1991, when the village suddenly acquired twelve color televisions. Workers leave home through their local connections and Dong villagers set up their own channels for recruiting and placement. Almost all return regularly. Men returning with a spouse often opt to stay in Changanying. They may leave again for a short-term coastal job but will soon go back home.

There is no doubt at all that Dong consciousness is strong among villagers, who are sensitive towards the Dong image in the eyes of visitors. The village director recalled the following story. A Taiwanese television station was once in the village to shoot Dong festivals. The cameramen refused the tea offered and questioned the sanitary conditions of the village. They acted as if the cups were all dirty. Consequently, villagers who had initially agreed to cooperate with the

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visitors refused to offer any help. Feelings are similar when villagers warily watch how Han outsiders come in to steal the local fish. They are particularly angry at how these thieves use poison, electricity, and bombs. The Changanying villagers now have their own patrols to defend their river resources.

Given that the sense of community and Dong consciousness are indeed strong, and that the sentiment towards any lack of respect for this community identity is also noticeable, how can a school system that mentions no ethnic traits attract parents? Lack of attention given to ethnicity in the school can result in education becoming something irrelevant, if not foreign. In other words, Dong ethnicity is not the reason for poor enrollment levels, but rather the schools' alienation of Dong consciousness. In such a situation schooling would be meaningful only if it brought wealth, but the potential for wealth is not clear to all locals.

One county education commissioner suggests that one path to reform would be to add ethnically related teaching materials to the current texts. But this would be useful only if the materials were also considered ethnic from the local point of view, not just from the provincial Education Commission's point of view. Another way would be to establish ethnic schools so that the ethnic commission will have a role to play in deciding the contents of the curriculum and intervening in placing the children in jobs after they graduate. This, however, would incur the suspicion of the education commission from the point of view purely of bureaucratic politics.

Later on, I had the opportunity to get to know the principal of the joint school better and he told what he thought an ethnic school should be:

> "It should always be [the case] that an ethnic community has an ethnic school. Students of an ethnic school should wear ethnic clothing. This has to do with the basic image, which would allow people to tell that you are a Dong student at first sight. The school should incorporate local ethnic culture as well as ethnic traits into its textbooks. . . . School buildings should have ethnic characteristics. In addition, all teachers should understand the ethnic language, even if they cannot speak it. I once tried to order a set of ethnic clothing for students, but the Education Commission vetoed [my order]. Its reason was that I should not increase the financial burden on the students' families. My second idea was to teach Dong mountain songs in the school. The Education Commission said that this would first require the approval of the provincial authorities. However, if students do not speak the Dong language well, how can they sing Dong songs? In the village, people still sing mountain songs all right, [but only] those over 30 are any good at doing so; schoolchildren generally can't. Those few children who can sing, at best sing out of tune. From the ethnic education point of view, my ideas are good, but the education authorities are indecisive. It is likely that the ethnic culture will perish if we do not do something about it. We have only a very few [people] left today who can still sing Dong songs. Children would all learn how to sing Dong songs if we could get together all those over 50 and 60 years old to teach them. It is a pity that the current curriculum is so rigid. Once they are incompatible

> with the policy of the superior, my ideas become no more than utopia. Today, it is a rule that Mandarin is the only language in the class. The county education commission checks on every teacher's Mandarin capacity."

There is another future benefit of ethnic education that the principal did not mention: once the school serves as a place of cultural renaissance, local tourism will benefit greatly. One municipal ethnic commissioner uses the Bai people in Dali as an example of how to use ethnic characteristics to boost tourism.[8] As to the Dong people, he is critical of the current practice of "pulling a few old ladies from home to sing a few songs." He thinks this is meaningless. He suggests that students should join the tourist activities to earn money for the village and to learn the Dong language at the same time. Ethnic commissioners from both the county and the municipal authorities dislike an education policy aimed at meeting the goals set up by a central government too remote to know what goes on in the mountains. One education commissioner replies that since Chengbu County is already an ethnic autonomous district, everything going on in the county is by definition ethnic, and that to create ethnic schools or promote ethnic education would be redundant. In other words, all Changanying Township schooling is ethnic. Legally, it cannot be otherwise.

For the same reason, provincial education authorities do not support the idea of establishing an ethnic middle school in Changanying Township – not to mention the fact that there are already two ethnic schools in Chengbu County. The county education commission further argues that a third school in the mountains would undermine the current system of enrollment and would merely give those who are not suitable for further education a pointless chance. However, one county ethnic commissioner holds exactly the opposite view:

> "I promoted the idea of establishing a third ethnic middle school, in the hope of preserving Dong ethnic characteristics. The education commissioner denounced me. The ethnic commission, on the contrary, praised me for having a good idea and believed that this was exactly what should be done. [The education commissioner] said that we are in an autonomous district, all education here is ethnic, and there is no need for overlap. The head of the ethnic commission suspected that [the education commissioner, who is a Miao,] was from a phony ethnic minority. Ethnic education should mean special education with ethnic content, not general education of ethnic people. I remember that I even had the design of the ethnic clothing for the third ethnic middle school ready. The Education Commission insisted that the provincial authorities must be consulted first. I was fortunate that the county's People's Congress supported me, otherwise I could have lost my job. Another idea of the ethnic commission was to build roads for the sake of developing tourism. Tourism would depend on the attraction of ethnic culture so we wanted to have a great campaign on ethnic culture. The education commission had a totally different view. The county government sided with the ethnic commission."

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modernization – cannot become a site in which to preserve the so-called backward culture. The criterion for judging backwardness is invariably economic, so ethnicity is increasingly irrelevant to the discussion. When ethnic commissioners refer to ethnicity, it is almost a synonym for being exotic – a self-imposed exoticism to attract tourists. Implicit in their argument is also an economic rationale.

One lesson from the experiences of schooling in ethnic Korean, She, Yi, and Dai areas is that the education commissions nationwide at various levels have so far failed to appreciate the mutual reinforcing effect of ethnic consciousness and school enrollment. Ethnicity, or some form of imagined ethnicity, is not necessarily counterproductive to school enrollment. To the state, the problems of schooling in Dong areas are the result of poverty and a backward culture. My research suggests a different perspective, namely that the meaning of schooling should be open to interpretation by local ethnic communities, which should be given ample room to practice *their* versions of education. It is possible that tourism and exotic images may prevail in the end, or that ethnicity may prove to be irrelevant in the long haul of history. But – and it depends on how local leaders are involved in bringing ethnicity into the school curriculum – this does not have to be the case. The few areas I have visited give the impression that no one is intelligent enough to tell in advance how ethnicity and schooling will interact. The school enrollment performance is accordingly related to the interpretation of the meaning of education, and it is the local interpretation that will determine the result of the enrollment drive.

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to pick up the kind of responses that other people or groups notice. Since to the state the point of ethnic education is to emancipate people from their backward ethnicity, ethnicity is irrelevant to the modernization-development discourse. Responses that come from a position within the constructed ethnic identities cannot be expressed because it is performance on enrollment that is the central government's policy priority. These responses could be deemed "meaningful" only if ethnic education could be conceptualized as practicing ethnicity. Practicing ethnicity could create a position from which the local community would be able to articulate either its support for or resistance to the state. In either case, interaction between identities at national and subnational levels would bring about many meanings that were previously overlooked, as well as re-enacting the trauma of nation-building.

I will use my field study in a local Yi community to discuss the issue of school enrollment. As with all the minorities, the ethnic definition of Yi is never clear. This is because Yi communities in different locations do not speak the same dialect and cannot communicate among themselves, so those who regard themselves as Yi, or are classified as Yi, are not always regarded as such by other Yi. Thus identifying a particular individual as Yi is inevitably arbitrary since, for the state, the act of identification is more important than the substance of Yi culture definition itself. Once defined, this Yi identity contributes little, if anything, to the design of a universal curriculum. But it does provide the most expedient standard by which to determine who are eligible receivers of privileges allowed by the system in the areas of childbirth, entrance examination, subsidy, and so on – options that are available to most minorities. Indeed, minority classification such as that of the Yi, which brings with it policy privileges, demonstrates the foundation of nation-building, dramatically restated by the granting of privileges. My research question for this chapter is whether or not this substitution of policy privilege for Yi ethnicity has an adverse impact on school enrollment figures. It is thus a political study, not an anthropological one.

The literature suggests that even though the Yi community remains passive, waiting to be mobilized into the state system, its members can still hope to achieve recognition. Some are actually able to allocate resources from positions within the state system to benefit their own community.[5] On the other hand, the ability to participate in education is not equally distributed among Yi members. This ability varies among individual members depending on the physical distance between home and school, on whether or not the class status has been autocratic in the past, and on gender. Not surprisingly, people's ability to take, and motives in taking, advantage of policy privilege are uneven. The same research shows that those in relatively disadvantaged positions tend to be passive, not seeing the benefit of schooling, while others, in comparatively advantaged social positions, understand that education facilitates upward social mobility. However, research also shows that upward social mobility is available to the relatively disadvantaged too, if they participate in school education.[6]

The agenda of this research does not deal with the content of education policy. The assumption is that parents in Yi communities determine their responses

primarily in accordance with their own familial traits, in terms of structural factors such as class status and gender. This chapter will explore the influence of education policy (or policy discourses) on the responses of the local community. In other words, Yi parents can have opinions about education policy, but they can respond not by questioning the meaning of nation-building directly, but only by refusing calls for enrollment. The implication is that education policy-makers are equally, if not more, responsible for the poor enrollment in my research site.

The research site is Meigu County, under the jurisdiction of Liangshan Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan. I conducted the research in two different stages. In the first, I interviewed Yi students from Southwestern Ethnic College in Chengdu. Research questions covered personal interests, attitudes to life, daily schedules, and family lifestyles back home. I met interviewees in teahouses located near the college campus or in a professor's apartment. In the second stage, I interviewed staff from four schools in Meigu: the County Middle School, Chengguan Elementary School, the Ethnic Middle School and the Ethnic Elementary School. Teachers spoke about the history of their schools and the current issues they are encountering. These interviews were conducted in offices, classrooms, outdoors in the fields, and at street corners or on the long-distance bus. Other interviewees included party secretaries, school principals, and teachers' relatives (who taught in remote mountainous areas even further away) returning home on vacation. I also spent much time with a Yi family. Some interviewees were Han but the the majority were Yi. Two-thirds were males and over half were senior faculty members. I was lucky that the county Education Commission was holding an all-county working meeting in the hotel where I was staying; I was able to interview two township party secretaries in charge of village education.

I have no doubt that Meigu education is facing serious problems. There is little willingness to attend the school, and government investment in school infrastructure is scarce or non-existent. Education officials as well as the school faculty express a strong sense of frustration. Since Yi research is beginning to draw attention from overseas sociologists and anthropologists, it would be useful to develop some discursive mechanism that might allow the local community to articulate opinion from their own perspectives. Otherwise a simple problem is liable to evolve into a historical problem. Communication between the local community and the policy-makers or researchers would also be spurious. My concern is that there are voices that should be heard but are not.

Some personal observations of attitudes to life

The trip to Meigu is in itself a learning experience. It took me twenty-four hours to get there from Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan. The trip prepared me for the vast cultural distance between mountain communities and the cities. I first took a train to Xichang, the capital of Liangshang Prefecture. After a twelve-hour journey I spent three hours negotiating and waiting for my bus ticket and the return train ticket. The bus arrived in Meigu after a horrendous nine-hour

journey of over 170 kilometers through the mountains. Xichang does not look much different from any other mainstream Chinese city; most of its residents are Han. On the bus to Meigu, however, all conversation was, as far as I could tell, in Yi.

In theory, the bus ride should have taken about six hours, but because public maintenance works are never done on schedule, the road was in very bad repair. One reason for road damage is the widespread cutting of trees, which exposes the land to erosion from the area's heavy rain. All vehicles have to go through falling water and rocks, and fast, muddy currents that swirl across the roads. The long lines of buses and trucks waiting to pass along a narrow road clearly indicate a crying need for some city-type modernization.

Our driver forced his vehicle through currents whose depth it was impossible to gauge. He never slowed down when the bus slid on the mud (often on the edge of a cliff), while simultaneously running into water falling from above, which would often hit the bus and push it toward the cliff edge. Beyond the cliff runs the Meigu River, a tributary of the Jinsha River, which is the major source of the Yangtze. Passengers found it extremely difficult to remain safely in their seats. The situation grew more dangerous as more and more new passengers tied their goods on top of the bus, raising the center of gravity.

The bus had a flat tire halfway through, but fortunately it carried a spare. However, the spare was a single wheel while the flat tire was a double. Despite the mismatch, we managed to get to the next station for a tire change. All the passengers waited patiently. The owner of the tire shop was in his thirties and his assistant son was barely 10. It was Wednesday afternoon. Obviously the son had dropped out of school. All the work was done with bare hands. What would take a quarter of an hour in the city took an hour and a half here. Most of the passengers gathered around the workers and watched. When the man finally inflated the tire, he told everyone to step back because, he said, the tire might explode. We all retreated about two steps.

While all this was going on, at least ten buses passed by, among them two heading for Meigu. The idea of changing buses didn't seem to occur to any passenger on our bus, or to five other watching passengers who had bought tickets while the bus was having its tire replaced. Two of them were unlucky, because our bus was too full to take them and they were asked to get off when we were ready to start our journey again. The driver never said a word to passengers throughout the whole process. He felt no responsibility for finding food, water, or a washroom for us.

Speaking of washrooms, I could not forget what I saw while waiting for the tire to be changed. A Yi villager dressed in a suit, with a tie and white sneakers drove his sheep through the crowd. One sheep urinated. As the sheep moved on, a toddler with his rear end completely exposed walked past, stopped, and sat in the urine puddle. He had an ice stick in his right hand and its wrapper in his left. When the wrapper dropped into the urine, he picked it up and sucked it. His mother just watched, motionless and undisturbed. This, I thought, is what the local people mean by saying "not to be surprised by anything appearing weird" (jian guai bu jing).

Plate 19 The "going home safely" sign above a flood-covered road in a mountain city: Meigu, Sichuan

It appears that Meigu residents are comfortably indifferent to everything around them. They do not intervene or take action but wait for things to happen. Behind this mentality is probably a lack of expectation. The attitude is that one cannot expect, for example, that other people or the authorities should be held responsible for the impact of their actions on one's own life. The opposite is also true: one is not to be held accountable for the impact of one's own actions on others. Is this mentality of indifference to be considered the local response to modernity? Is it a constraint on further modernization? Could it be a result of or a response to modernization?

Not taking action is clearly only one of the local attitudes to life. These people are clearly interested in the pursuit of material benefits for their families. Businessmen risk their lives on that ruined bus road for the sole purpose of making money. Those going to Xichang are mostly businessmen and intellectuals. In Meigu, small shops open till as late as 1 A.M. Tire shops display a "24 hours" sign. In the 1990s, the woodcutting industry boom in Meigu improved economic conditions there. The government's environmental concerns have restricted further development in this regard. Slogans such as "return the crop fields to the woods" (*tui gen huan lin*) are found in every corner. As substitutes, cash crops such as pepper, tobacco, apples, and black wheat are encouraged.

A third aspect of the local attitude to life is the deep care for human relations – the other side of the extraordinary passivity I witnessed. Most families keep their

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Plate 20 A three-wheeler decorated in the traditional Yi colors of red and yellow, Meigu, Sichuan

family trees on record. The head of a clan usually has a complete list of ancestors. In real life, I find that students going to Chengdu are supported not only by parents but also by cousins. In-laws are closely linked in their ordinary lives. Friends are everywhere in town. The doctor who hosted me in Meigu greeted almost everyone who passed by us on the street. Schoolteachers, shop owners, county officials, as well as pedestrians on the street all knew him. This is not a small town by any standard, since it has at least 20,000 inhabitants, and is the county capital. It is typical, in the families I interviewed, for brothers to help one another with school work or investments. The bus stops whenever there are waving hands. Passengers eagerly help newcomers find a place for their goods and poultry.

Finally, Meigu is alive with ethnic Yi characteristics. Street signs are printed in both Chinese and Yi. Residents continue to wear Yi-style clothes, particularly women. Men wear traditional red-and-yellow earrings. The Yi language is regularly taught in the school. Yi families welcome guests by killing a small pig for dinner. The pig is salted and baked in the Yi style.

The juxtaposition of traits such as indifference on the one hand and pursuit of one's interests on the other is intriguing. Indifference indicates passivity – no plan, lack of system, and an attitude of letting things remain the way they are. The pursuit of material interests is, in contrast, goal oriented and tool-conscious. To the environmental authorities, for example, this juxtaposition is bad because it means that people will steal timber, pollute the land, spit, and

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throw cigarette butts. How about education? Can one blame these attitudes for the poor school enrollment figures in Meigu? The following discussion will look at how these seemingly paradoxical attitudes interact with schooling in Meigu. I first examine the ways in which the Yi as an ethnic minority exist. This will allow me to explore further the meaning of education in Meigu. Then I report on the difficulties local schoolteachers experience in their work. Finally, I suggest a few propositions concerning the interaction between ethnicity, attitude, and schooling. At the end of the chapter, I briefly treat the implications of education policy.

Practicing Yi ethnicity

People practice Yi ethnicity in various ways in their daily lives. Among the most typical are activities during traditional Yi folk festivals such as Yi dancing and singing. The township director from Weiqigou (some 30 kilometers from the Meigu governing center) confirmed that festival celebrations continued in his jurisdiction. He introduced the Yi calendar, which celebrates the new year in November. Even for Southwestern Ethnic College in Chengdu, this period is observed as an official vacation. However, Yi people in the neighboring province of Yunnan do not celebrate the Yi new year but that of modern China. For the college students I interviewed, this is evidence that the Yunnan Yi community is sinicized.

Yi as well as Tibetan students at the ethnic college are used to group dancing every weekend. Over the years, relationships between Yi and Tibetan students have been difficult. College professors are extremely sensitive to this issue and manage it with great care. The most recent inter-group fighting took place in 1996, so no student currently enrolled has experienced any physical confrontation. All Yi students know how to dance, and students from other ethnic communities soon learn how to do so, and join them at the weekends. Another ethnic activity often mentioned is wrestling. Meigu County has produced a number of national champions in the past few years. Local beauty contests have also witnessed winners from Meigu. According to a Meigu doctor, this is because Yi girls always score highly in contest categories such as style, looks, clothing, and self-selected performance.

The college does not teach Yi dancing, nor do high schools. Different sources give different stories regarding the teaching of Yi dancing in elementary schools. None of the schools in the capital of Meigu County teaches Yi dancing, but the school at Weiqigou Township does. One student who comes from Meigu and is currently enrolled in the ethnic college showed me a few photographs of his childhood, which indicated that he was performing Yi's Dati Dancing. His dancing teacher, we discovered after exchanging information, was the same person who, among others, told me in Meigu that the school did not teach Yi dancing. Probably what the student considers teaching is no more than an after-school event for the teacher. Yi dancing is not hard to learn. Two ethnic Qiang students whom I interviewed in Chengdu, for example, told me that they

enjoyed learning and dancing with Yi schoolmates every weekend. Although it does not teach Yi dancing, the college actually organizes dance teams to perform for occasions.

Yi students in the ethnic college organize a community club which includes all students from Liangshan and sub-associations for each of its counties. They meet regularly at the beginning and the end of a semester to welcome newcomers and say farewell to those who are leaving. Like all other ethnic and Han students in the Ethnic College, Yi students spend most of their spare time searching the Internet, chatting in the teahouse, and shopping. They love pop songs, particularly those from Hong Kong and Taiwan. Traditionally, Yi students are the best basketball players in college. I was told that basketball stars find girlfriends more easily, many of them ethnic Tibetan or ethnic Qiang. One student I interviewed still wore an earring on his left ear with three beads, red in the middle and yellow at the two ends. For Yi girls, convention has it that they should wear earrings on both ears, which is what I saw on Meigu streets.

Families have different expectations of the way their student sons and daughters should find marriage partners. One told me that his family has no expectations and that he himself is open to finding girlfriends of any ethnic background. He habitually buys small gifts costing less than 3 renminbi for classmates whenever he returns to school from Meigu. Another student acknowledged that he holds back his more "nationalistic" inclinations. He wanted to preserve the Yi culture as well as the Yi blood. His grandmother never lets any chance go by to remind him that he has to marry a Yi girl. Ironically, his current girlfriend is ethnic Qiang. In contrast, in Meigu, there is no such atmosphere for young people to make friends freely. Matchmaking is still popular. Most of those over 40 today had their marriage arranged for them by parents before they were born. Couples are not allowed to stay with the wife's parents; in modern urban settings they should be separated by at least one street. The Yi had a class system in the past. Although the state overthrew it in the 1950s, families usually keep their own history. By looking at the surnames or the nature of the work of the forefathers, one can tell the person's historical class status, which therefore continues to affect matchmaking today.

Few students at the ethnic college are interested in politics. When people chat on BBS (Bulletin Board System) stations across the nation, the most popular subjects are athletics and movies. However, during the Taiwan Straits crisis in 1996, even those who expressed no interest in politics acknowledged that they were very concerned at the time. (Speaking of politics, all the students I interviewed showed disgust towards the required courses on politics. Except for those who majored in Yi literature, most Yi students want to study business management.)

One major feature of Yi ethnicity that the interviewees often failed to mention is the use of the Yi vernacular as well as the written Yi language. Once you step beyond the city of Xichang, you will find that Liangshan is virtually a land solely of Yi speech. Getting into Meigu is an experience in learning Yi-language signs, giving the outsider a strong sense of the prevailing ethnicity. Students with a Yi

literature degree used to teach the Yi language in the past after graduation. They have more options available today. They can choose to become, for example, hosts of Yi programs broadcast by Yi radio stations. The government has begun to print Yi-language newspapers and thereby create further job opportunities for literature majors. Another possibility is to become an interpreter to serve the increasing number of tourists, scholars, and journalists. Once the importance of the language increases, both the Party and the government will require that all documents issued in Meigu be printed in Yi as well as in Chinese. The report given by the bureau chief of education in Meigu on the all-county conference on education work, held in Meigu in September 2000, criticized thirty-eight work units for failing to add written Yi to their documents.[7] Moreover, Meigu has a Yi language research institute that is tracing the origin of written Yi back to the oracle used in prehistoric times. It has also identified a number of parallels between Yi and Korean.

In order to meet the rising need for the Yi spoken language, Meigu County has since 1984 specified three experimental townships which were to concentrate on Yi-language teaching, beginning in their elementary schools. The first generation of students on whom this experiment was tried received their college degrees in 2000, ready for assignments in the field of teaching and interpretation. The quality and the scope of Yi-language teaching dropped dramatically beyond the three townships. Generally speaking, it started from the third grade. Yi is a required subject for the entrance examination to the high school. Local intellectuals believe that written Yi is easy to learn but also easy to forget. Since written Yi is not used in daily life, students easily forget what they learned in the previous semester and have difficulty catching up.

The incentive for schools to teach the written Yi language is that students are allowed extra credits for taking the native tongue in the entrance examination to high school as well as to college. In other words, language teaching is more a result of calculated interest than of any real need. This has caught students in a dilemma. On the one hand, the Yi vernacular environment in the Meigu mountains is unfavorable to the teaching of Mandarin, yet there is no practical use for written Yi beyond the local area. Compared with many other places where ethnic language teaching begins in the first grade to prepare students for Mandarin teaching in the higher grades, Meigu's Yi language program is intended neither as a preparation for the Mandarin system nor for practical use. Nonetheless, even college students who forget what they learn carry with them a sense of ethnicity acquired through the language heritage.

It may turn out that children fail to learn either Mandarin or Yi well. Those who are good at learning school texts will lose touch with Yi as they leave the hometown for advanced studies. In the three experimental townships, there are other problems too. For example, texts used for Yi-language teaching are translations from Han texts. As Han texts change year by year, it is unlikely that Yi-translators will keep up with the pace. In practice, Yi teaching rarely follows the curriculum. One interviewed student recalled that when she was in school, she jumped right into the ninth book after finishing the second.

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> "We moved directly from the slave society to a socialist society and therefore did not have an urgent demand for a high civilization. This is not like most of the Han areas, where people want to study anyway, despite the fact that they may not pass the entrance examination. For the Yi people, the only purpose of studying is to become a state employee or to do business so that they can get rid of poverty.[11] We have a low level of mental preparedness, which cannot be improved very much. It is useless to talk about nine years of compulsory education because we cannot even achieve compulsory education at the primary level. Many children drop out."

There are two elementary schools and two junior high schools in the capital of Meigu. These schools' most urgent problems are to do with the building materials available to them, and the curriculum. In the case of Meigu Ethnic School, the current school Party secretary arrived in 1990. He has not seen any major construction or maintenance since his arrival. In Chengguan School, the brick class building was turned into cement in 1989; other buildings are still made of brick. There is no space for music, games, athletics, or for storing the school's collection of 9000 books. Interestingly, there is a computer room at Chengguan, a luxury not seen in any of the other three schools. There are thirty-six dormitory rooms available for the sixty-three Chengguan teachers. In Meigu Middle School, a family of three generations lives in an apartment whose area is less than 56 square meters. One cannot physically turn round inside the washroom. The tiny hall for public gatherings was declared unsafe in 1998. At the end of 2000, no maintenance funding had come through despite promises, not to mention money for computer facilities. Meigu Middle School once decided to purchase computers through a loan, but the prefecture authorities vetoed the proposal.

In Meigu Middle School, the proportion of Yi students has risen from 20 percent in 1985 to 87 percent in 1999. A similar trend took place in Chengguan Elementary School, where the proportion rose from 30 percent to 75 percent. The proportion of Yi teachers has also increased. Most Han teachers want to leave the mountains. To replace them, Yi teachers return home after completing courses in normal-school training elsewhere. The reason for the change in proportion is accounted for less by any success in enrollment than as a result of massive retirement by the generation of Han cadres who emigrated to Meigu in the early 1950s with the government establishments. On retirement, their children no longer stayed in Meigu, nor did their school-aged grandchildren. The proportion of Yi students in each school rocketed as a result. As for the Han teachers, many stay because they have yet to find a position outside the mountains. Most of them plan to leave in due course. Meigu, as a state-designated county of poverty, cannot possibly attract Han teachers. For an after-school class, a teacher receives an allowance of 3 renminbi. Replacements are hard to find as teachers leave, so teachers who stay are overloaded.

To make full use of the school budget, Chengguan School encourages teachers to take leave and find other employment opportunities. In return, they pay a certain fee to the school each year. Moreover, the remaining teachers share their

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during the spring semester. To cope with the investigation team sent by the county government, township cadres as well as teachers have to recruit students by using money from their own pockets. They face a cut in salary if they fail to reach the recruitment floor set by the county government. Some township governments fine parents 2 renminbi for not sending their child to school.

In government-sponsored ethnic schools, there is generally no tuition fee. The cost of a room and board is set at a lower rate of 100 renminbi for each student at the ethnic elementary school. Students at the ethnic middle school pay no fee and the government gives 30 renminbi to each; parents are responsible for finding the remainder of their child's living costs. This was the allowance set in 1990 when the school began, and the amount remains the same today. The expenses of middle school students have risen rapidly, however, and naturally enrollment has become increasingly difficult to achieve. In 1990, the enrollment level was so impressive that an applicant could be turned down. Today, however, the school is running below capacity and teachers themselves are disappointed at the quality of the students' learning. The ethnic middle school has so far completed the construction of less than half of its buildings, far behind the plan established in 1990. No funding in any form has been available since 1995.

In Meigu's high school, there are only two classes. In the middle school, there are four classes for the second grade and three for the first and the third grades. The consensus reached between prefecture and county education officials is that Meigu middle and ethnic middle schools should be combined. There will be a test for all the middle-school teachers younger than a certain age. Only those passing the test can stay in Meigu, and the rest will be reassigned to remote mountain schools. It takes more than sheer incompetence to initiate a school ten years ago, stop investment after five years, and close it down in the tenth year. It is only necessary to look at the divergence in attitude towards education among parents, teachers, and government to understand the waste that the change in policy has caused.

The prefecture's education policy further hindered the enrollment effort in Meigu. To meet local people's concern with making quick money, the prefecture modified the policy in order to promote occupational schools at the junior high level. Since graduates from the occupational middle school were assigned jobs by the government and could thereby free themselves from peasant life, parents were highly interested. As a result, regular middle schools lost a number of student enrollments. The placement policy has recently changed again to accommodate the policy of reform and openness to the outside world. The government no longer assigns jobs to occupational school graduates. A village schoolteacher told me that of 400 students graduating from occupational middle schools in 1999, only forty had found jobs. He himself was not fortunate enough to have been assigned a job, so he decided to stay in the village as a substitute teacher. Some of his fellow classmates decided to enroll in the military, for when soldiers retire in their forties, the military will arrange a civilian job for them. All this explains why many parents feel that the child is probably better off staying home to help in the fields than losing farming skills but having no job.

Propositions concerning Meigu schooling

My research suggests that practices that relate to Yi ethnicity (such as kinship identity, language characteristics, and Yi festivals) take place outside the education system. The only exception is the promotion of the Yi language. This promotion, be it in the written form for the growing readership of newspapers or in the spoken form for preparing audiences for radio broadcasting, also serves the government's propaganda purposes. Spoken Yi does not have to rely on the government to survive, anyway. For the urban Yi people, the need for a written language is very low indeed. The villagers in the mountains do not learn written Yi as children. In short, the teaching of the Yi language cannot be enough of an incentive for parents to enroll their children in the school.

If Yi ethnic consciousness is not a relevant factor in the school, it is wrong to explain the low enrollment in terms of Yi ethnicity; rather, the explanation should take into account the lack of Yi ethnicity in the school. My argument set forth in the following discussion points out that the lack of incentive as regards school enrollment has to do with policy and attitude as well as economic conditions and history.

Those in Meigu who stress the historical factors are basically Han teachers or Han school administrators. The prevailing view among this group is that the Yi's slave system deprived the local people of a sense of development. I think this is a problematic analysis because Yi college students have successfully integrated into the greater social environment without reports of any serious problems. Local businessmen in Meigu willingly pursue economic profit, apparently with no hesitation. Doing business is without doubt a socially legitimate activity. This is not to deny that mountain villagers are little motivated by profit, since they do not raise sheep primarily for profit in the market. Nevertheless, the use of fines as a sanction against those who refuse to enroll their children in school implies that both the township governments and the parents are conscious of money. Parents specifically want their children to become wage-earners rather than field-cultivators. When they drop out, it is a conscious choice because schooling fails to ensure that the child will find an urban job. All this demonstrates that there is some sense of development.

One Meigu Middle School teacher firmly believes that Meigu students are indeed motivated to pursue knowledge. His view is that the source of the problem is not only poverty but also culture. It is true that the parents are too poor to pay the school fees. For him, if there is a cultural problem, it is not a problem deriving from the local culture but rather one relating to the school texts, whose content is often unrelated to the conditions of local life and whose supply is often slow and inadequate. There is also a problem concerning discrimination. The graduates from the ethnic normal school face a placement barrier, since Han schools refuse to recruit them. Children who drop out of the school generally do not feel any loss of opportunity, because job openings are not available to them anyway.

Yi teachers are concerned about local education, to the extent that they willingly use their own salary to purchase texts or cover the general school fee for

children in order to keep them in school. Teachers in the mountains live under extremely frugal conditions where electricity and water are lacking. One teacher experienced a whole week in the mountains without food. These teachers probably could not sustain themselves were it not for their dedication to the education of children belonging to their own ethnic group. If teachers of Meigu origins are not trapped by the so-called slave consciousness, there is no reason to believe that parents from their childhood neighborhood are. This brings us to the policy side of the issue.

The English literature on social mobility in Liangshan correctly points out that education policy can have transforming effects. But the policy planning and execution processes in Meigu are flawed, as my research shows. For example, the budget for classroom construction failed to come through, the enrollment campaign for the occupational middle school offset the drive for the regular middle school, the teaching facilities were insufficient, and the morale of teachers is dropping. In a word, the government does not have a focus when allocating educational resources. Its investment decisions were too myopic to be continued as originally planned. Emphasis was put on the rate of enrollment rather than on the substance of education. Ethnicity too easily fell into the category of backwardness to motivate participation.

The Meigu Bureau of Education can do very little about the current problems: collection of the education fee in the villages is ineffective (a responsibility of township governments and village councils); the education resources are meager (a responsibility of prefecture government); the rate of enrollment cannot be raised (a problem for township cadres); and the teaching in schools lacks modern perspectives (a responsibility of teachers).

The passivity of the Yi again shows up in this example. The local government does not know how to coordinate a long-term investment plan. It simply adapts when forced to by the situation, and the resulting plan often lacks vision. Education policy appears to be a matter of problem-solving. Perhaps it might be better described as "problem-complaining". School administrators complain about the downgrading of their status, but only a Han secretary dared to raise this issue. Yet they do not seem interested in coming up with a solution to the difficulties they face in the school's development. In the ethnic elementary school, the principal complained that while other schools can win sympathy from the public by finding a media outlet through which to publicize their poor conditions and receive masses of support from all over the country, no media representatives have yet been to Meigu. In the ethnic middle school, where there are rumours about the school closing down, anxiety is widespread among young teachers. But no one is taking any action, even the passive one of attempting to find a position outside the Meigu school system. Not taking action on events happening, or not believing one can make a difference by doing something, seems to be the widely shared attitude among locals. Passively watching conditions deteriorate seems to be a common Yi attitude toward life, as I learned during my bus ride to Meigu.

It seems that, both for the local community and the local authorities, people look at a goal (such as making money or increasing the rate of enrollment) in too

specific a way, and allow too little time to see the outcome of an investment. As a result, the government can cease its investment in the ethnic middle school and let it simply fade out of existence, even before it is completed. Parents can have their children drop out of school whenever they see signs that current students are not able to find a placement. As the central government has decided that developing the northwest will be its major project during the next decade, and Meigu is included in the priority area to be developed, teachers I interviewed are beginning to expect something concrete to come out of the government, but they do not formulate their own proposals. They are simply waiting for a miracle to happen.

In Meigu, education does not represent an instrument with which to familiarize local people with the modern state system, or to facilitate their participation in it, any more than the forces of state intervene in local lives. As it currently stands, schooling cannot promise participation in the state, loyalty to the state, or benefits from the state; this is simply because the schooling process has never been a part of life in the Yi community. Schooling exists not to serve the people, and it definitely does not serve the state in this example. It is purely a ceremonial observance, in which only the enrollment rate matters.

Another reason why education policy stimulates inarticulate, negative responses among the local community is that the notion of the state carries implications that are unkind to Yi ethnicity. In the first place, it was the impact of the state that destroyed the historical class system in Liangshan. State employees do not hesitate to berate the local people about the legacy of a slave mentality. The idea of the destructive force of the state was reinforced during the first forty years of communist rule, a period that a well-known scholar calls "the period of socialist poverty."[11] Education officials have rarely made policy on the basis of local need, have rarely believed that such a move would be pertinent to the emancipating project.

For the local populace, the slave system which had provided and allocated labor forces in the past was removed, only to be replaced by socialist planning in managing field production. When the ruling party declared the death of the planning system, the Yi people were left with no mechanism by which to organize production. It was only natural that the clan system should take over all the coordination work. If schooling is to emancipate the new generation from the bondage of "feudal," "backward" kinship, it is destined to run into opposition from parents. The same scholar who criticizes socialist poverty therefore proposes that township cadres and schoolteachers understand and rely on the same kinship networks as sustain the local community. In other words, for the sake of school enrollment, education officials must conceptualize schooling as being not in opposition to kinship, but in harmony with it. If they insist that education is a public duty while kinship is a private barrier, the attitude of indifference towards schooling is likely to continue well into the twenty-first century.

Which of the four factors – the past slave legacy, poor economic conditions, incompetent government, or inappropriate policy – has contributed most to the attitude of indifference towards public affairs in general and schooling in particular

is hard to say. One thing that is certain is that neither the local authorities nor schoolteachers are consciously striving to develop something positive from the local Yi history. The past is always represented negatively. In all schools, from elementary through middle school, high school to college, the idea of Yi ethnicity has no meaning, except in the language class. However, the reason for holding the language class is at best obscure, and its usefulness is limited. While some connection exists between schooling and Yi festivals, Yi dancing, and Yi history, it is necessary to recognize the role of Yi identity before the enrollment drive can achieve its aims in Meigu. The current association of schooling and enrollment with penalties, market placement, and entrance examinations only serves to alienate the Yi.

Conclusion

Positive self-images were never an issue on Meigu's education agenda. Because economic development is used as the criterion by which to judge the level of civilization, the happiness brought by taking part in Yi dancing or celebrating Yi festivals is of only marginal relevance. In the mountains, ethnicity is relevant only during the evenings or weekends. The disadvantages in the areas of language and wealth naturally alienate Yi children from school learning. The lack of a competitive motive among the children makes parents dubious about the utility of schooling. Since schooling no longer guarantees paid employment in the city, why would any parents bother with the process of enrollment, except to avoid being fined? Imposing a fine shows that the state wants to push its limits further, but the purpose for such a push remains unclear.

The local people's indifference may not be the direct result of education policies today. It nonetheless reflects the lack of any notion of efficiency in the mind of the local people. This lack has had to do with the strong impact of the Chinese state starting in the 1950s, which changed every aspect of local life. The same forces continued to hinder the development of the local economy through decades of wrongheaded planned economic practices. Nowadays, the sheer incapacity of state officials to make consistent, longer-term investment in education only diminishes the credibility of the school system in parents' perception. It is not surprising to see an attitude of indifference towards anything public or state sponsored.

In this chapter, I raise the question of people's attitude to life, which did not occur to me before I began my trip. With this intervening variable, it appears to me that the three most salient factors of historical legacy, economic conditions, and education policy are becoming more and more intertwined in the Yi situation. This leads me to suspect that it may be the lack of positive images of Yi ethnicity in the process of schooling that explains the low enrollment rate. To break the current deadlock, what the local community believes to be relevant to their ethnicity should be incorporated into school curricula. Current ethnic education, which has nothing to do with ethnicity, should not be called ethnic.

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Conclusion

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14 Outside "China moments"

Ethnicity as strategic practices

Atheoretical contributions

Minorities, as discursively essential elements in the construction of the Chinese territorial state, are at the same time potential sources of threat to the unity of the state. The existence of minorities – or, more specifically, backward minorities – allows the process of "civilization" to continue while, on the other hand, this process reinforces minorities' images of backwardness. "Civilizing" projects enliven China in the sense that the scope of these projects is restricted to territorial China and therefore they create a discursive boundary between the inside and the outside of that nation. China must be reproduced repeatedly to camouflage the embarrassing fact that ethnic boundaries do not precisely coincide with the country's borders and that not all minorities are culturally harmonious with everyone else inside the borders. Those who act in the name of China and those who belong to ethnic categories are constantly negotiating and renegotiating how to perform Chinese citizenship. While different interpretations and practices may give a variety of meanings to the notion of China, depending on the issues, personalities, localities, and time points involved, they all collude in essentializing China as an unquestionable, authentic entity.

This is what I try to dispute in this book. Not that China as a territory cannot meaningfully exist, but that it does not exist meaningfully without temporal movements that make China a constant referent point, explicitly as well as implicitly. In this sense, China is more a process than an entity. China does not just contain citizens, but also lives on millions of mini-practices of citizenship. I would argue that China is a part of minorities rather than minorities a part of China. However, political scientists who study minorities would rather depend on a linear historical perspective and encourage the state to provide the conditions for ethnic culture to ripen for modernization. Only if we look from inside an ethnic mind can we appreciate the ambiguity of the meaning of China and the hybridity as well as the fluidity of ethnic identities. Without the assumption that ethnicity exists objectively, any research method designed to find true representation or discover the genuine composition of ethnic consciousness is doomed to self-deception. It is a self-deception intended to allay the fears of researchers anxious about the loss of certainty in their own identities.

Between the state and ethnic people is the common assumption that blood kinship is the factor that defines ethnicity. The belief in and the emotion attached to blood kinship protect the state–minority relationship, for the state can simultaneously grant privileges to minorities and ignore the detrimental effects of its policies on ethnic consciousness. Similarly, minorities do not have to worry that ethnicity will perish even if their lifestyles go through a sinicization process as long as the category of their blood ethnicity remains legal and institutional. This collusion is neither good nor bad, but most would prefer not to talk about it. This mentality hinders and distorts our understanding not just of ethnicity but also, and perhaps more importantly, of ourselves.

I have intended this book to contribute to studies of Chinese ethnicity by making the following ten observations:

1 The minority political issues are a modern state phenomenon rather than an ethnic phenomenon. Without the system of the modern sovereign state, there would not have been the kind of minority politics we have been witnessing.
2 Chinese citizenship means different things to people within different ethnic categories. "Civilizing" projects incur a variety of responses that have no common features.
3 Developmentalist linearity is a result of the practices of the modern state system, not a law stipulating the path a modern state has to take.
4 Looking for generalizations in the ways in which minority ethnic people respond to "civilizing" projects is an unhelpful direction for social science research to take.
5 "Civilizing" projects affect the way minority ethnic people understand themselves but cannot determine how minorities are affected.
6 Even though the Chinese Communist Party possesses far-reaching mobilization mechanisms, there is still no universal orientation towards citizenship among people belonging to different ethnic categories, which raises the possibility that no such common orientation ever existed within the Han population, either.
7 While it is the state establishment that contributes most to the legalization and specification of ethnic categories, neither the state nor the market provides the arena where ethnic consciousness appears and flourishes.
8 There is no inevitable conflict between ethnic identities and state identity or patriotism. The only assured conflict is the time each person devotes to the reproduction or evolution of different identities. However, there is no reason that a particular event or activity cannot contribute to both at the same time.
9 The political science approach to state and ethnic identities, which is territorially oriented, is partial. Identity is a matter of formation, practice, process, and interaction. One has to adopt a temporal dimension in order to allow the people under study room for creativity.

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cultivating the fields together, while others sometimes give their land to relatives in exchange for a meager rent and the tax in kind due from their house at the end of the autumn season. Most peasants go to coastal cities to sell their labor. The management capacity of Zhangguan Village is small compared with that of Liuminying. Cadres come from the same family. Villagers are not interested in elections. Those who have saved enough money in Canton will only remodel their own houses. These are not the features of all the 99 percent of those villages that have divided their land. Even in Western Hunan, other villages have different styles of political economy. For example, in Zanzhu Village, three hours' walking distance from Zhangguan, there remains a piece of collective land beside the land that has been divided up. More important is that the seeds and cash crops that villagers cultivate come from an outside source, and this requires collective negotiation. The village management team is understandably more effective than that in Zhangguan. Collectivism remains in villages that have divided their land.

It would be premature to conclude that a collective political economy is a product of any land policy of the central government. Liuminying's collective economy may be more important than collective farming in maintaining its leadership. A view of Wuxing Village in Ningxia would confirm this hypothesis. Wuxing villagers have divided the land but cadres continue to own plenty of economic resources and to command cooperation. Once the land is divided elsewhere, the cadre loses control and communal work such as dam-building or road-building is left undone. The investment the village committee makes has been successful in the past decade, and Wuxing has suddenly become a star in local government terms. The practical difference with Liuminyang is that Wuxing cadres encounter serious competition in elections. The last election in 1998 (when I was there) witnessed a winning margin of only twenty-two votes. This would have been unthinkable in Liuminying in 1994. In other words, collective economic strength cannot determine political culture.

Complicated political economic styles are present in coastal areas, too. Qibao Village, in the vicinity of Shanghai, is one of the most developed villages in China. The village Party owns a huge building and has a tightly organized network. With over 10,000 villagers under its jurisdiction, no direct election has been attempted. Villagers do not seem to care, since most have their own profitable businesses or jobs. Political participation, as experienced in Wuxing, is by no means as active as one would expect. Political activists remain active indeed, but this is far from the kind of mass participation widely believed by Civil Affairs officials to exist when there is a resourceful village council. Many other villages in coastal Jiangsu actually have strong village enterprises that take over the work of the village council, such as road maintenance, irrigation maintenance, social welfare, and schooling. The village council is not the center of political economy in these wealthy villages, a leadership style beyond the imagination of village council elsewhere. This generalization is risky even for villages in the neighborhood of Liuminying Village. Also in the vicinity of Beijing is Juyongguan Village. There are seven natural villages under its jurisdiction, and

the distance among them makes it impractical to hold all-villager meetings. The village director who had won two re-elections in 1994 is not as charismatic as Liuminying's vice-director. Charisma is obviously less relevant here because he does not get to see villagers in collective farms every day. Communication between the village council and the villages depends on public address systems; political participation is limited to delegates from each natural village. The village management work is doubtless hard. Beijing municipal Civil Affairs officials all believe that the director is willing to continue, nonetheless, because the position is convenient for him as well as providing social status. However, hard work is not necessarily motivated by worldly interests. If we return to the mountains in Western Hunan and visit Miaozhai Village, we will see a Party secretary who has managed his personal land well enough not to need to care about village affairs. The village director, his newly elected colleague, would like to have quit several times because of the amount of work and the difficulty of achieving consensus among the villagers. The secretary is able to persuade his young colleague to stay by stressing a rather abstract benefit: the secretary wants his colleague to build a road for the villagers so that future generations will always remember them.

It would appear that mountain villages and coastal villages are clearly different, but variations remain too wide within each type to merit any distinct categorization. Villages in Wenzhou are famous for their subcontract systems. The village council is crucial in sourcing as well as acquiring contracts and recruiting experienced retired managers from urban enterprises. Collective economy is not always strong in these villages, but collectivism shows itself in the cooperation and division of work in the sense that often a whole village becomes an assembly line, with individual households negotiating among themselves concerning the distribution of subcontracts. In Shenzhen, over 2 million workers from inland areas do all the dirty work and promote the 200,000 locals to a kind of bourgeoisie whom Shenzhen officials call "aristocratic peasants." They are the only ones entitled to dividends and the right of political participation.

The characteristics of cadres or superior government officials further complicate the analysis. In Xinli Village, in the vicinity of Tianjin, one can see scenes familiar to those in Liuminying. All the houses are modern and look the same. There are similar scenes in villages in Zhangjiagang County, Jiangsu, which has become a media attraction in recent years because of its rapid growth and collective style of leadership. While Tianjin is in the north and Jiangsu in the south, the leadership style is a clue to their similarity. Strong leadership with a strong collective economy is what we can see in Liuminying. Xinli is nonetheless very different because its Party secretary simultaneously serves as the head of the village enterprise board. He has been secretary since the age of 21 and had led the village for forty-one years at the time of my visit in 1995. He established his reputation as a reformer at the beginning of the reform period after the Cultural Revolution and, equally importantly, the village economy took off before village elections were institutionalized. In short, the timing of economic take-off affects the fate of the leadership that was installed during the Cultural Revolution.

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Chinese political culture that can help us know what a real people mean when they are in politics or outside it. If collectivism is not sufficient, the universal presence of Communist Party rule is not, either.

The Communist Party as processes

The Constitution of the People's Republic of China stipulates in its preface that all should adhere to Communist Party leadership. Few Chinese citizens have not heard the song that praises the CCP: "if there had not been a Communist Party, there would have been no new China." This Communist Party rule used to be the indicator of totalitarianism in China.[2] Later, scholars debated whether two or three policy lines were involved in political struggles.[3] It has further been discovered that even in the past, the Communist Party was not a harmonious whole. Negotiations continue at various levels concerning the ruling of such a huge social system.[4] With reform in process, decentralization further deconstructs the impression of China as a whole.[5] No one would question the reality that the Communist Party continues to rule China today, but its rule may have to be more carefully interpreted, especially when the Party itself has been advocating the separation of Party and state.

One must ask how to maintain Party divisions at various levels in harmony in their promulgation, interpretation, and execution of policy. No one should forget when, in 1991, Li Ruihuan stated amid the overwhelming anti-bourgeois liberalization atmosphere that Party indoctrination or "thought work" must allow local expediencies.[6] After Deng Xiaoping's tour in the south to launch the so-called second wave of thought reform, one can understand that the impression of overwhelming anti-bourgeois liberalization was not really all that overwhelming. Subsequent stories, one after another, reveal all kinds of anti-revolutionary campaigns in the past, which simply confirms that the Communist Party in the 1970s was not one harmonious whole.[7] On the issue of land distribution and collective farming, no uniform practices have been achieved at local levels. Party secretaries at these various levels have dramatically different approaches to the issue.[8] In brief, adherence to the Party's leadership neither helps nor hinders our understanding of Communist rule over the past fifty years.

Since the term "market" became a constitutional concept in 1993, at the same time as the specification of China as a country in the early stage of socialism with a historical mission to develop its productive forces, one can no longer tell from their clothing, rhetoric, or income whether people are Party members. The only common element is that they all have to hold policy sessions at set intervals and distribute policy documents to members. Even there, the variety can be dramatic, for the Party secretary of a particular locality or enterprise might not take these documents seriously enough, or might simply dislike them.

Regarding village democracy, for example, village, township, county, and provincial secretaries naturally have different considerations. Resistance may emerge at any level, for different reasons, of course. Some are so active they even want to upgrade democratic elections to the level of the township. Several townships

throughout the country have expressed their willingness to be trial sites for elections for the post of township director. This is not only against policy but also against the status quo mentality of most township governments. Some act aggressively by designing a two-level election, with township residents choosing the two final candidates to be voted on by the Township People's Congress as the law requires.

Finally, in the winter of 1998–99, Buyun Township of Suining County violated the law and held a direct election for township director. Both township and county secretaries must have been involved to make this possible, and the candidate with Party support nonetheless won as expected. The real issue, however, is that the Party at lower levels has been pushing for experimentation with new institutional possibilities, and this is done against the central Party's policy. Lower Party secretaries feel that legitimacy is on their side and that they are doing what they do for the purpose of reform. The rhetoric of reform has thus created a whole new ground for lower Party secretaries to bring into the open what has been going on under the table. The variety of local Communist Party divisions stops an observer accurately predicting behavior or interpreting sometimes ostensibly compliant behavior. To understand the Communist Party, one must also know which province, which ethnic group, and which enterprise the particular Party secretary comes from.

Probably all Party secretaries will appropriately perform thought education, and even closely watch for the development of potentially subversive elements. For the center, this is utterly important, but for local secretaries, the significance of patriotism varies. The degree of variety in the Party necessarily parallels that in society. The breaking of unity in this sense understandably pits local secretaries against secretaries from a higher tier of government, or Party members against one another at the same level. It should not be surprising if in some locality an opposition Communist Party emerges in the near future. First, it is inevitable that Party organizations in different localities interpret the nature of their work differently. For example, while an inland province has a Party that emphasizes the importance of counteracting "bourgeois liberalization," and the continuation of the socialist type of welfare, a coastal province needs a Party that will take the lead in market reform. The diverse interpretations of the Party's mission breed opposition at all levels. This is not quite opposition in the liberal sense. Those in opposition could be neo-leftists, neo-conservatives, neo-Confucianists, or neo-Communists, on the one hand, or reformists, socialist liberals, modernists, and the like on the other.

Local oppositions do not necessarily go against the Party leadership at the center. Moreover, the center may cash in on the kind of opposition politics at the local level. In other words, opposition-style Party members do not oppose Communist leadership; they oppose a particular interpretation of the Party's mission. Their existence serves the collectivist goal of the central Party leaders, in the sense that they are like an antibody fighting against any tendency to excess at lower levels. The center, or any superior level in the relative sense, enjoys its neutral arbiter's position of having some to its left and others to its right. The

legitimacy of a local opposition would be based on the claim that it is genuinely Communist, whereas the local ruling group is not. Further analysis would require one to look more closely at the specific environment of the county, township, or enterprise in question. The collectivist management of Liuminying could be a model for neighboring villages or even the superior township government, reflecting a socialist proclivity. With this model in the neighborhood, it would not be surprising that an opposition could be rising to challenge the land division policy in one's own village. I expect "China," as it develops, to become an assorted combination of cities and provinces, among which some may be like Hong Kong, others like Singapore or Taipei, and still others like Zhangjiagang in the 1990s, Beijing in the 1950s, or Shanghai in the 1920s.

All in all, the meaning of adherence to Party leadership is subject to further interpretation, but it is necessary to move beyond the scope of patriotism. Party members do not all join the Party to oppose the bourgeoisie or imperialism, though some may still do so. To anyone who is determined to analyze the increasingly diverse phenomena in ethnic areas, this is an intriguing development. Understanding that China as a whole is not a good analytical category and the Party is not a useful predictor of behavior, we will be ready to jettison any generalizing epistemology on entering our subject of study. Nonetheless, it would still be useful to see what those China moments are in which ethnic people encounter the state – for any development outside these China moments is partly defined by the ongoing process of becoming China.

One final thought

If China is just moments, and ethnicity discursive practices and affective exercises, what do we make of a world said to be composed of either territorial states like China or ethnic identities such as those I study in this book? I would like to use an analogy, not a scientific category, to answer the question. I feel that China, or ethnic identity, is like a cloud. If you move away from it, it remains, but its shape changes constantly; it may even disappear and reappear. If you move closer, the boundary between the cloud and everything else is obscured. While a cloud can be studied scientifically, its meanings cannot. Meteorologists are not the only people who study, enjoy, and imagine the clouds.

I have tried to open the China discourse so that whoever acts in the name of the state cannot monopolize the meanings of being Chinese. Since my main target is China or the Chinese sovereign state, I hope I have not offended anthropologists by using one of their subjects of study for the purposes of political science. Ethnic studies is an area full of surprises and coincidences which mainstream political scientists regard as meaningless, if not threatening. Lessons from the field demonstrate that the state can dominate only in its own discursive domain. The situation where political scientists encounter ethnic studies is particularly important today, as they debate whether to abolish the institution of the state in the age of globalization. Without question, the state in the geographical sense is under jeopardy. How can political scientists rescue their studies of political states

when facing the current trend of ahistorical epistemology? I hope that this book can become a bridge between anthropology and political science, as well as a prescription for the crisis of political science as a discipline.

Similar lessons can perhaps be drawn from other areas of study which also attract the attention of political scientists. For example, one might want to study how the state specification of poverty has changed over time and how those considered poor have responded. This would allude to the meanings of modernity and open the field for contest by both "the poor" and "the ethnic." To take another example, one might study how different disadvantaged groups that exist at various levels have employed self-feminizing techniques to procure benefits from the state or the Western worlds. Can the reflexive Orientalism I find in Western Hunan be both subversive and creative, yet carry some obvious self-detrimental effects? One final example is the meaning of globalization, whether it empowers the local by means of transnational connections or weakens local confidence, resulting in enhanced dependence on those acting in the name of China.

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Notes

1 Introduction: Inside "China moments": ethnicity as legality and policy

1 Sheng Hu, *Zhongguo gongchang dang qishi nian* (The Chinese Communist Party's seventy years), Beijing: Chinese Communist Party History Press, 1991, p. 1.

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3 See Brackette Williams, "A Class Act: Anthropology and the Race to Nation across Ethnic Terrain," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 18, 1989, 401–444.

4 Li Shitao (ed.), *Zhishifenzi lichang* (Positions of the intellectuals), 3 vols, Changchun: Times Art, 2000.

5 See David Campbell, "Violent Performances: Identity, Sovereignty, Responsibility," in Y. Lapid and F. Kratochwil (eds.), *The Return of Culture and Identity in IR Theory*, Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 1997, pp. 163–180.

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9 Louisa Schein, *Minority Rules: The Miao and the Feminine in China's Cultural Politics*, Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2000.

10 Dru C. Gladney, *Muslim Chinese: Ethnic Nationalism in the People's Republic*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991.

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12 Colin Mackerras, *China's Minority Culture: Identities and Integration since 1912*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995.

13 Colin Mackerras, *China's Minorities: Integration and Modernization in the Twentieth Century*, Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1994.

14 Thomas Heberer, *China and Its National Minorities: Autonomy or Assimilation*, Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1989.

15 Uradyn E. Bulag, *Nationalism and Hybridity in Mongolia*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998; David Y. H. Wu, "Chinese Minority Policy and the Meaning of Minority Culture," *Human Organization* 49, 1, Spring 1990, 1–13.
16 Ralph Litzinger, *Other Chinas: The Yao and the Politics of National Belonging*, Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2000.
17 Tim Oakes, *Tourism and Modernity in China*, New York: Routledge, 1998.
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19 Prasenjit Duara, *Rescuing History from the Nation: Questioning the Narratives of Modern China*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995, p. 32.
20 Jun Jing, *The Temple of Memories*, Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1996, p. 167.
21 For example, Edward Friedman, *National Identity and Democratic Prospects in Socialist China*, Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1995; David S. G. Goodman and Gerald Segal (eds.), *China Deconstructs: Politics, Trade and Regionalism*, New York: Routledge, 1994; Dali Yang, *Beyond Beijing: Liberalization and the Regions in China*, New York: Routledge, 1997.
22 This goes back to the Foucaultian reminder of the impossibility of having any coherent narrative. See Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," in D. F. Bouchard (ed.), *Language, Counter-memory, Practice*, Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1977, p. 138.
23 Ann Anagnost, *National Past-Times*, Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1997, p. 4.
24 See Chih-yu Shih, "Pedagogy of Chinese Diplomacy," in C. Shih, *Reform, Identity, and Chinese Foreign Policy*, Taipei: Vanguard Research Institute, 2000.
25 Jin Binggao, *Minzu lilun tonlun* (The general theory of ethnicity), Beijing: Central Ethnic University Press, 1979, p. 451.
26 Shi Zhengyi, *Guanyu minzu kexue yu minzu wenti yanjiu* (On the study of ethnic science and ethnic issues), Beijing: Central Ethnic College Press, 1993, p. 79.
27 See *Guanyu jian guo yilai dangde ruogan lishi wenti de jueyi* (Resolutions concerning certain historical issues of the Party since the establishment of the state), Beijing: n.p., 1981, mimeo.
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29 Jin, *Minzu lilun tonlun*, p. 253.
30 Zhang Houan and Xu Yong (eds.), *Zhongguo nongcun zhengzhi wending yu fazhan*, (Political development and stability of Chinese villages), Wuhan: Wuhan Press, 1995, p. 766.
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Kuikuan, 1991; Fred Y. L. Lin, "Politics and Body Social in Colonial Hong Kong," in T. Barlow (ed.), *Formation of Colonial Modernity in East Asia*, Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1997, pp. 193–222.

15 The discussion is included in my chapter "Ethnic Economy of Citizenship in China: Four Approaches to Identity Formation," in M. Goldman and E. Perry (eds.), *The View of Citizenship in Modern China*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002.

16 In this perspective, Mette Halskov Hansen discusses the development of Naxi intellectuals in her *Lessons in Being Chinese: Minority Education and Ethnic Identity in Southwest China*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999.

17 For related discussion, see Louisa Schein, *Minority Rules: The Miao and the Feminine in China's Cultural Politics*, Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2000; I discussed this in a conference paper, "Multiple Constructivism of Ethnicity: The Case of Jishou, Western Hunan", paper presented at the Conference on Twenty-first Century China, Hong Kong, April 7, 2000.

18 See Stevan Harrell (ed.), *Cultural Encounters on China's Ethnic Frontiers*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1995; Gerard A. Postiglione (ed.), *China's National Minority Education: Culture, Schooling, and Development*, New York and London: Falmer Press, 1999; Dru Gladney, *Muslim Chinese: Ethnic Nationalism in the People's Republic*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991.

19 For the inspiration ethnic minorities can provide to the Han in their coping with the Western influences, see Han Liqun, *Shen congwen lun: Zhongguo xiandai wenhua de fansi* (On Shen Congwen: reflections on modern Chinese culture), Tianjin: Tianjin People's Press, 1994. For English literature, see Jeffrey Kinkley, *The Odyssey of Shen Congwen*, Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1987; and Hsiao-yen Peng, *Antithesis Overcome: Shen Congwen's Avant-gardism and Primitivism*, Taipei: Institute of Chinese Literature and Philosophy, Academia Sinica, 1994.

20 Ideally, the village council, under the guidance of the Party, draws up a draft compact, circulates it among all the villagers for comments, revises it accordingly, and holds a referendum on it.

21 See Esther Yao, "Is China the End of Hermeneutics? Or, Political and Cultural Usage of Non-Han Women in Mainland Chinese Films," *Discourse* 2, 2, 1989, 115–136.

22 The strength of ethnic consciousness is difficult to measure. To a certain degree, its evaluation depends on the level of analysis. Officials typically take a cross-ethnic perspective while ethnic intellectuals are more concerned with the loss of ethnicity. Lower-level analyses can come from schoolteachers or tour guides.

3 Interpreting elections in Taiwanese and Chinese minority areas

1 Minxin Pei, "Creeping Democratization in China," *Journal of Democracy* 6, 4, October 1995, 76; Larry Diamond, "Beyond Authoritarianism and Totalitarianism," in Brad Roberts (ed.), *The New Democracies*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1990, pp. 227–249.

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3 Chih-yu Shih, "Public Citizens, Private Voters," in Chong-pin Lin (ed.), *PRC Tomorrow*, Kaohsiung: National Sun Yat-sen University, 1996, pp. 145–168.

4 On the authoritarian culture and democratization in Taiwan, see Fu Hu and Yun-han Chu, "Electoral Competition and Political Democratization in Taiwan," paper presented at the Conference on Democratization in Taiwan, Institute of International Relations, National Chengchi University, Taipei, January 8–10, 1989.

5 For a more detailed account of the background of this study, see Tang Hongchung, "The Legends of Shanmei," Chiayi: Tang Hongchung, 1999, mimeo. Tang was the acting township director for Ali Mountain Township for three years between 1996 and 1998 and is currently a staff member of the Chiayi County government.

6 A very similar change in identity politics took place in Mongolia roughly at the same time. For more information, see Uradyn E. Bulag, *Nationalism and Hybridity in Mongolia*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.
7 Ichiro Numazaki, "The 'Real' Community under 'Imagined' States: The Social-Economic Transformation and the Rise of the 'New Taiwan Consciousness' in Contemporary China," paper presented at the International Conference on Imaging China: Regional Division and National Unity, March 19–21, 1997.
8 Council of Mainland Chinese Affairs, Executive Yuan, *Taihai liangan guanxi shuoming shu* (Position papers on cross-Taiwan Strait relations).
9 For this reason, the Ministry of Education has edited a new volume of supplemental reading for junior high students: *Renshi taiwan: shehui zhang* (Knowing Taiwan: the social chapter), Taipei: Ministry of Education, 1997.
10 Tzvetan Todorov, *The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other*, New York: Harper Perennial, 1992.
11 Hung Chao-chun, "Caozu jiqi zhengming wei zouzu" (Rectification of name from Cao to Zou today), *United Daily*, 7 November 1988, p. 8.
12 Kuo Yi-chun, "Saixia zu yu ai heiren xiangjian huan" (Saixia and Black Dwarf met happily), *United Daily*, 16 June 1988, p. 8.
13 About Shanmei's history, see Chih-yu Shih, "Ethnic Economy of Citizenship in China," Paper presented at the Conference on Chinese Citizenship, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass., October 30, 1999.
14 Wu Feng was pursued and killed in 1769 for being suspected of poisoning Zou people, kidnapping Zou girls, and cheating Zou traders. It was the Japanese colonial government that rewrote the Wu Feng incident into its modern version, which was conveniently adopted by the KMT government taking over in 1945. The rationale of the rewriting was to mobilize and civilize the Zou people through the construction of an inferior Zou identity. See Hsu Chiyi, "Exploring Ancient Sites in Chiayi," *Jiayi wenxian* (Chiayi literature) 28, 1998, 23.
15 For various different interpretations of Chinese election in general, see James A. Robinson (compiler), *Villager Committee Elections in China: A Selected Collection of Essays*, Atlanta: The Carter Center, n.d.
16 For dissenting views, see, for example, Chih-yu Shih, *Collective Democracy*, Hong Kong: Chinese University Press of Hong Kong, 1999; Kevin O'Brien, "Implementing Political Reform in China's Villages," *Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs* 32, 1994, 33–59.
17 See, for example, Merle Goldman, Perry Link, and Su Wei, "China's Intellectuals in the Deng Era: Loss of Identity with the State," in L. Dittmer and S. Kim (eds.), *China's Quest for National Identity*, Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1993, pp. 125–153.
18 The government intervention, as well as economic growth, may create various seemingly incompatible results that do not allow any generalized conclusion. See the discussion in Mette Halskov Hansen, *Lessons in Being Chinese: Minority Education and Ethnic Identity in Southwest China*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999.
19 In Shanmei, the Association of Community Development was established in 1982. This was the time at which elections became a relevant factor in Shanmei's life.
20 Recent ethnic studies confirm that each ethnic area has its own features not characterized by general descriptions. See, for example, Gerald A. Postiglione (ed.), *China's National Minority Education: Culture, Schooling and Development*, New York and London: Falmer Press, 1999.

4 Reflexive Orientalism in Tujia–Miao Jishou, Western Hunan

1 Mette Halskov Hansen, *Lessons in Being Chinese: Minority Education and Ethnic Education in Southwest China*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999.
2 Dru Gladney, *Muslim Chinese: Ethnic Nationalism in the People's Republic*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991.

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5 Chih-yu Shih, "Ethnic Economy of Citizenship in China," in M. Goldman and E. Perry (eds.), *The View of Citizenship in Modern China*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002.
6 Alexander Wendt, "The Agent–Structure Problem in International Relations Theory," *International Organization* 41, 1987, 335–372.
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8 Naeem Inayatullah and David Blaney, "Knowing Encounters," in Y. Lapid and F. Kratochwil (eds.), *The Return of Culture and Identity in IR Theory*, Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 1997, pp. 65–84.
9 Lily H. M. Ling, *Conquest and Desire: Postcolonial Learning between Asia and the West*, Basingstoke, U.K.: Macmillan, 2002.
10 Kwame Anthony Appiah, *In My Father's House*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992; Homi K. Bhabha, "The World and the Home," *Social Text* 31–32, Summer 1993, 141–185.
11 Sankaran Krishna, "The Importance of Being Ironic," *Alternatives* 18, 3, 1993, 385–417; Chih-yu Shih, *China's Just World: The Morality of Chinese Foreign Policy*, Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 1993.
12 Margaret Byrne Swain, "Commoditizing Ethnicity in Southwest China," *Cultural Survival* 14, 1, 1990, 26–32; Tim Oakes, *Tourism and Modernity in China*, New York: Routledge, 1998.
13 Norma Diamond, "The Miao and Poison," *Ethnology* 27, 1, 1988, 1–25.
14 I believe that the Jishou government paid for the whole event, including transportation, guide, food, and performance, without my advance knowledge. They could have honestly thought that my request to visit tourist sites was not for research but for fun. Indeed, I had thought I was going to see a family that made a living by performing these programs. In reality, I met them in the programs.
15 Edward Said, *Orientalism*, New York: Vintage, 1979.
16 Ralph Litzinger, "Making History," in S. Harrell (ed.), *Cultural Encounters on China's Ethnic Frontiers*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1995, 137.
17 Wang Tianxi, *Minzu fa gaiyao* (On ethnic law), Kunming: Yunnan People's Press, 1988.
18 Gao Fayuan, *Zhongguo shaoshuminzu daode gailan* (Overview of moral principles of Chinese minorities), Kunming: Yunnan People's Press, 1992.

5 Clan Confucianism in Tujia–Miao Yongshuen, Western Hunan

1 See, for example, Mette Halskov Hansen, *Lessons in Being Chinese: Minority Education and Ethnic Identity in Southwest China*, Seattle University of Washington Press, 1999; Gerard A. Postiglione (ed.), *China's National Minority Education: Culture, Schooling, and Development*, New York and London: Falmer Press, 1999; Stevan Harrell (ed.), *Cultural Encounters on China's Ethnic Frontiers*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1995; Chih-yu Shih, "Ethnic Economy of Citizenship in China," in M. Goldman and E. Perry (eds.), *The View of Citizenship in Modern China*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002.
2 Typically, I conducted these interviews in the mountains in the house of the interviewee, be they a village director, private villager, or business manager.
3 This means that all the interviews are collective. Township officials sometimes help clarify questions and answers, and sometimes interfere with questions that touch upon their own interests. It is impossible for me to separate interviewees from interviewers. This was especially true in the mountains. At Jishou University, however, it was one interviewer facing five interviewees; no accompanying officials were interested in the discussion.

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4 Ms. Gao of Fenghuang Tourist Department made the observation on January 13, 2000.
5 Zhuge Wuhou was a legendary philosophical and military thinker during the late Han and early Jin Dynasties.

9 Muslims between mosque and state in Litong, Yingchuan

1 Michael Hunt, "Chinese National Identity and the Strong State: The Late Qing–Republican Crisis," in L. Dittmer and S. Kim (eds.), *China's Quest for National Identity*, Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1993, pp. 62–79.
2 See Chih-yu Shih, "A Postcolonial Reading of the State Question in China," *Journal of Contemporary China* 17, 5, 1998, 125–139.
3 See Lia Greenfeld, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992.
4 Ding Guoyong (ed.), *Ningxia huizu* (Muslims in Ningxia), Yingchuan: Ningxia People's Press, 1993, pp. 177–181.
5 See Feng Jinyuan, *Zhongguode yisilanjiao* (Chinese Islam), Yinchuan: Ningxia People's Press, 1994, pp. 73–84.
6 Yu Zhenggui, *Zhongguo lidai zhengquan yu yisilanjiao* (Islam and each regime in Chinese history), Yinchuan: Ningxia People's Press, 1996, pp. 280–345.
7 See Li Dingren and Cai Guoying, *Zhongguo xibei shaoshu minzu jiaoyu* (The education of ethnic minorities in northwest China), Yinchuan: Ningxia People's Press, 1996, pp. 210–217.
8 See Zhang Houan, *Zhongguo tese de cunmin zizhi* (Peasant autonomy with Chinese characteristics), Taipei: Kuikuan, 1998.
9 Chih-yu Shih, *Collective Democracy*, Hong Kong: Chinese University Press of Hong Kong, 1999.
10 Voters are allowed to write in a name of their choice if they dislike any of the listed candidates.
11 Li Xueju, Wang Zhengyao, and Tang Jinsu, *Zhongguo xiangzheng zhengquan de xianzhuang yu gaige* (The current situation and reform of township government in China), Beijing: Chinese Social Press, 1994.

10 Assimilation through ethnic language in Yunnan and Shenyang

1 Xin Fuwen, *Wenhua yuyan xue* (Cultural studies of language), Wuhan: Huabei Education Press, 1990, p. 210.
2 In Xishuangbanna, Yunnan, officials of the Commission of Education strongly advocate assimilation via Mandarin-language education.
3 From comments made by Mr. Ding, a Bai scholar studying modernization as it affects Bai women in Xizhou Township, Dali County, Yunnan.
4 Lily H. M. Ling, "Democratization under Internationalization: Media Reconstructions of Gender Identity in Shanghai," *Democratization* 3, 2, Summer 1996, 140–157.
5 Lily H. M. Ling and Chih-yu Shih, "Confucianism with a Liberal Face: The Meaning of Democratic Politics in Postcolonial Taiwan," *Review of Politics* 60, 1, Winter 1998, 55–82.
6 Ma Lihua, *Minzu jiaoyu xinlixue* (Psychology of ethnic education), Kunmin: Yunnan Education Press, 1997, 117.
7 Ma Xueliang, "Jianli juyou zhongguo tese de minzu yuyan xue" (Establishing the theory of ethnic language with Chinese characteristics), *Minzu yuyan* (Ethnic languages) 6, 1991.
8 Li Dingren and Cai Guoying, *Zhongguo xibei shaoshu minzu jiaoyu* (The education of ethnic minorities in northwest China), Yinchuan: Ninxia People's Press, 1996, p. 87.

9 See the brief discussion in Lee and Cai, *Zhongguo xibei shaoshu minzu jiaoyu* 121.
10 Ibid., pp. 125–126.
11 Ibid., pp. 127–129.
12 Ibid., p. 129. The Yi language taught in Meigu County, Liangshan Prefecture of Sichuan serves a similar function; see Chapters 12 and 13.
13 Ma, "Jianli juyou zhongguo tese de minzu yuyan xue," p. 119.
14 Zhang Wenbo, "Minzu wenzi yu shaoshu minzu de sao mang he puji xiaoxue jiaoyu wenti" (Ethnic characters, campaigning against ethnic minorities' illiteracy, and the issue of promoting primary education), in Editorial of Ethnic Work (ed.), *Yunnan minzu jiaoyu gaige shijian yu tansuo* (Practices and exploration of ethnic education reform in Yunnan), Kunming: Yunnan Ethnic Press, 1990, pp. 232–233.
15 Zhang Gongxin, "Jianchi guanche dang de minzu zhengce, ba minzu yuwen jiaoxue gongzuo gaoshangqu" (Persist in executing the Party's ethnic policy, advance the education work on ethnic languages), in Editorial of Ethnic Work (ed.), *Yunnan minzu jiaoyu gaige shijian yu tansuo*, p. 216.
16 Ibid.
17 Zhou Yaowen, "Minzu yuyan yu minzu jiaoyu" (Ethnic languages and ethnic education), in Editorial of Ethnic Work (ed.), *Yunnan minzu jiaoyu gaige shijian yu tansuo*, p. 221.
18 The Ethnic Office of Yunnan Chinese Communist Party Working Department and the Commission for Ethnic Affairs of Yunnan (eds.), *Minzu tuanjie zhi hua: yunnan shen minzu tuanjie dahui cailiao xuanbian* (The blossom of ethnic unity: selected materials for the Conference on Ethnic Unity in Yunnan Province), Kunming: Yunnan Ethnic Press, 1983, 272–276.
19 Ibid., pp. 288–290.
20 Ibid., pp. 291–295.
21 Wang Yourning, "Zai wazu diqyu shiyung wa yuwen jiaoxue zhi wo jian" (My personal opinion on teaching in the Wa language in Wa regions), in Ethnic Office and Commission for Ethnic Affairs (eds.), *Minzu tuanjie zhi hua*, pp. 258–259.
22 Ethnic Office and Commission for Ethnic Affairs (eds.), *Minzu tuanjie zhi hua*, pp. 296–300.
23 Zhou, *Yunnan minzu jiaoyu gaige shijian yu tansuo*, p. 224.
24 Ethnic Commission of Lijiang Naxi Autonomous County, "Yung minzu yuwen sao mang xiaoguo hao" (Using the ethnic language to reduce illiteracy works well), in Editorial of Ethnic Work (ed.), *Yunnan minzu jiaoyu gaige shijian yu tansuo*, p. 246.
25 The Bureau of Education of Dehong Region, "Dehong zhou de shuangyu jiaoxue shijian" (The practices of bilingual education in Dehong Region), in *Yunnan minzu jiaoyu gaige shijian yu tansuo*, p. 242.
26 Zhang, "Jianchi guanche dang de minzu zhengce," p. 218.
27 He Lifeng, "Mu yu jiaoxue zai minzu jiaoyu zhong de diwei he zuoyung" (The functions and roles of mother tongue teaching in ethnic education), in *Yunnan minzu jiaoyu gaige shijian yu tansuo*, p. 237.
28 Bureau of Education of Dehong Region, "Dehong zhou de shuangyu jiaoxue shijian," p. 241.
29 Ibid.
30 Ethnic Commission of Lijiang, "Yung minzu yuwen sao mang xiaoguo hao," p. 248.
31 Labazhi-Lanxiang County Government, "Women shi zeyang shixian lisuwen wu mang xiang de" (How do we reach the goal of no-lisu-illiteracy county?), in *Yunnan minzu jiaoyu gaige shijian yu tansuo*, p. 253.
32 This was especially true in the cities.
33 Many students in the Liaoning area take Japanese as their second language.
34 Information from Ms Li, Vice-Principal of Xita School.
35 Information from Mr Zheng, Principal of Xita School.

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4 For a case study, see Mette Halskov Hansen, *Lessons in Being Chinese*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999.
5 See the discussion in Stevan Harrell and Ma Erzi, "Folk Theories of Success: Where Han Aren't Always the Best," in G. A. Postiglione (ed.), *China's National Minority Education: Culture, Schooling, and Development*, New York and London: Falmer Press, 1999, p. 236.
6 Ibid., pp. 232–233; Yi Mouyuan, *Yizu shi yao* (Keynotes on Yi history), Beijing: Social Science Literature Press, 2000, pp. 653–663.
7 Di Qiezhi, *Xue nian du jiaoyu gongzuo qinghuang huibao ji xia xue niandu jiaoyu gongzuo anpai yijian* (The academic year summary report on the 1999–2000 education work situations and opinion concerning education work arrangement in the next academic year, 1999–2000), ink-print, September 7, 2000.
8 Yi Yuanmou, *Yizu shi yao* (Notes on Yi history), Beijing: Social Science Literature Press, 2000, p. 688.
9 Ibid., pp. 722–723.
10 See Di's report.
11 The government will assign to those finishing the middle school a waged job either in the government or in an enterprise, both believed to be better than working at subsistence level in the mountains.
12 It is the policy of the Party that all important political positions should be shared among the Communist Party, the other eight small parties, and non-partisan citizens.
13 Yi, *Yizu shi yao*, p. 712.

14 Outside "China moments": ethnicity as strategic practices

1 The interviews reported in this section were mostly conducted between 1994 and 1997. Some were done very recently. For those carried out between 1994 and 1997, the scripts are attached to the report to National Science Council Project, entitled *The Study of Local People's Congresses*, filed in 1997.
2 Franz Schurmann, *Ideology and Organization in Communist China*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965.
3 Frederick C. Teiwes, *Leadership, Legitimacy, and Conflict in China*, Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1984; Dorothy Solinger, *Three Versions of Chinese Socialism*. Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 1984.
4 Andrew Walder, *Communist Neo-traditionalism*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986; Jean Oi, *State and Peasant in Contemporary China*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989.
5 David S. G. Goodman and Gerald Segal (eds.), *China Deconstructs: Politics, Trade and Regionalism*, New York: Routledge, 1994; Susan Shirk: *The Political Logic of Economic Reform in China*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992; Edward Friedman, *National Identity and Democratic Perspectives in Socialist China*, Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1995.
6 Li Ruihuan, *Shang xia bu qiangqiou yizhi, zuo you ye bu yaoqiou duiqi* (Do not force uniformity between the superior and the subordinate, nor demand conformity between the left and the right), *United Daily*, 13 January 1991, p. 11.
7 For example, see Yang Xiguang, *Niou gui she shin lu* (A record of ox ghosts and snake gods), Hong Kong: Oxford, 1994.
8 See Yong Xu, *Baochan daohu cheng fu lu* (A record of sinking and surfacing of the contract system), Zhuhai: Zhuhai Press, 1998.

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